The COMMUNIST

VOL. VII APRIL, 1928 NO. 4

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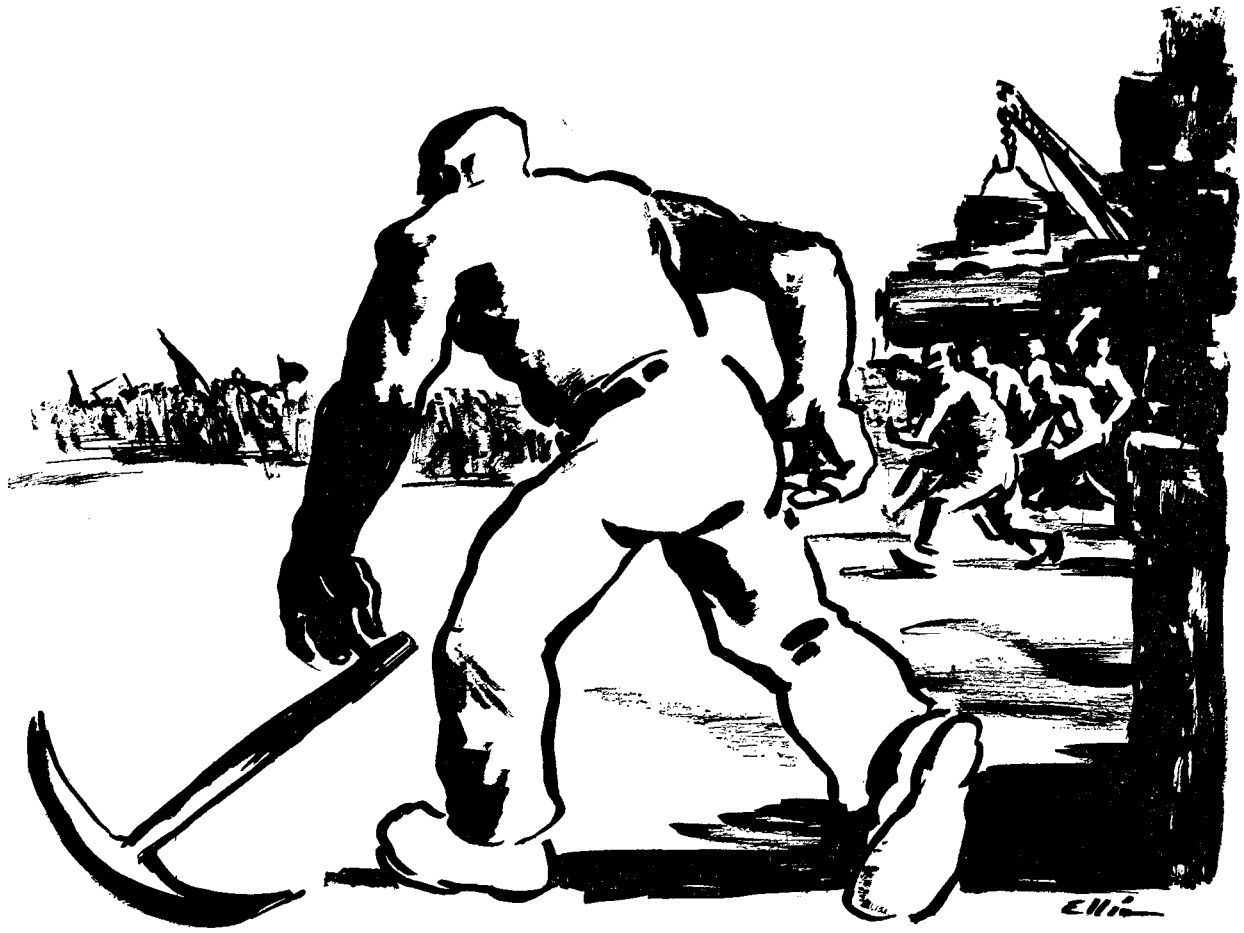

The Miners' Answer to the Lockout

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TASKS AND LESSONS OF THE MINERS' STRUGGLE

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

THE struggle now going on in the mining industry against the coal operators and the corrupt Lewis administration is of the deepest importance to the whole working class. Not only is the Miners Union at stake, but also, to a large extent, the entire labor movement. Consequently, our Party's most vital interests are at stake. It is not surprising, therefore, that this basic struggle presents a whole series of valuable lessons as well as urgent tasks for our Party and the left wing.

Outstanding in the Pennsylvania-Ohio strike phase of the general struggle is the unparalleled resistance of the strikers. No American strike has ever shown such tremendous tenacity in the face of overwhelming odds. Many of the strikers have been out for two years or more, living on mere crusts of bread and in windswept shacks. Troops, state police, injunctions, betrayal by the union officials, have not served to break the miners' indomitable spirit. At the end of a year, their strike is now actually becoming stronger. Their splendid proletarian resistance is a forecast of the bitter revolts American capitalism is going to encounter when it makes serious attacks against the standards of the workers. The miners' strike is a brilliant answer to those class collaborationists who try to convince us that the class struggle is over in the United States. It is a storm signal of the new spirit of revolt brewing deep in the ranks of the American working class.

THE UNITED FRONT IN THE STRUGGLE

The miners' struggle, especially the inner union phases of it, has been rich with experience in the application of the united front tactic. It is a striking example of the correctness of this Leninist policy. On the basis of a program of elementary proposals necessary to the very life of the union's broad masses, ranging from the mildest progressives to the Communists, all in revolt against the Lewis machine, have been united in the broadest, most sweeping opposition movement in the history of any American labor union.

At first, this united front was carried out too much at the top solely, due in part to the existing terrorism which temporarily prevented the crystallization of a broad mass movement in the union. But now it is based on wide masses of the rank and file, who have united themselves through a score of great delegates' conferences

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in the various districts. This, of course, puts the whole movement upon a much sounder, healthier basis.

During the strike, many progressives feared that to criticize the Lewis administration would tend to weaken the strike and to put the opposition movement at a great disadvantage as regards Lewis' attacks on it. This was the old familiar one-front theory of fighting. But the left wing steadily maintained that criticism of Lewis was basically necessary during the strike. Otherwise, Lewis and his gang would have a free hand to strangle and betray the strike. Events have completely justified this contention. The rapid development of the Save-the-Union movement, with its open attack upon the Lewis reactionaries, has enormously strengthened the strike and given it its first real chance for victory. The entire opposition now understands this clearly.

The struggle has also developed other weaknesses of the progressives, most of which the Party has failed to sufficiently criticize. Among these were a widespread failure of middle group bodies to realize the gravity of the struggle and to take the necessary decisive measures; the initiation of movements to establish a separate anthracite miners' union, attempts in the various districts to fight the local fakers but to avoid fighting Lewis, etc.

The strike has placed tremendous calls upon the opposition for actual leadership in the struggle. Consequently, many new, young leaders are being developed, real fighters who are destined to lead the miners in the great battles looming ahead. Not only have they been called upon to lead the fight for mass picketing, mass violation of the injunctions, etc., but now they must put through the opposition's basic strategic plan for winning this strike and re-establishing the union, namely, the stiffening of the immediate strike itself, the drawing in of Illinois, Indiana, Kansas and other signed-up districts, together with the great masses of unorganized in Pennsylvania and West Virginia, and eventually also drawing in the anthracite miners. The strike presents a tremendous problem of strike strategy, with the opposition endeavoring to mobilize the whole mass of bituminous miners under one national agreement, and while the tricky Lewis administration is desperately seeking to get any sort of individual or arbitration agreements at all costs.

ORGANIZING THE UNORGANIZED MINERS

The strike situation also thrusts up in the most imperative form the question of organizing the unorganized. This matter, a burning issue in all phases of the labor movement, is a life and death question for the Miners Union. The Save-the-Union committee is

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attacking this problem vigorously. It is undertaking organization on a mass scale. Preliminary conferences are being held all through the unorganized Pennsylvania and Ohio districts. A real foment is stirring through vast masses of miners. They are rapidly travelling the road to joining the strike struggle. In the coal industry the slogan: "Organize the Unorganized," which all too often remains mere words, is being translated into living reality on a huge scale.

The mining situation also instructs us valuably regarding the use of the slogan "Save the Union," which the left wing put out two years ago when pointing out that the union's life was in danger. The trade unions are in a deep crisis everywhere. Shall the left wing advance the slogan "Save the Trade Unions?" Some say not, declaring that it is meaningless. But the answer to this controversy is to be found now in the Miners Union, which is now facing the brunt of the employers' offensive. The great masses *do* understand this slogan, and they *do* rally around it for real struggle against the bureaucrats and the employers to protect and build their union and to defend their living standards. This slogan should be given far wider and more intensive application by our Party and the Trade Union Educational League throughout the labor movement, the life of which is now jeopardized by the attacks of the employers.

The situation of the miners is also highly instructive regarding how the left wing must fight the reactionary labor bureaucracy. No section of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy is more corrupt and ruthless than that in the Miners Union. Stealing elections, packing conventions, expelling and blacklisting militants, grafting off employers and workers, are all part of the day's work for the misleaders of the miners. For a while, its terrorism shattered the opposition and reduced it to an underground existence. But now the left wing and progressives, although menaced in every district with union gunmen, working hand in glove with the police, have found ways and means, through the mass conferences and network of rank and file organizations of the Save-the-Union committee, and the living issues behind the movement, to burst through this shell of terrorism and organize a great mass opposition for a head-on clash with the reactionaries. Long have we discussed the ways and means to "legalize" the Trade Union Educational League in the trade unions and to give it a real mass base. The building of the Save-the-Union movement, with its mass paper, *The Coal Digger*, shows how this can and must be done. Many mistakes have been made in this work, but these are of minor importance compared with the successes.

Practically all of the major problems confronting the labor

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movement are especially emphasized in the case of the miners. Unemployment, for example, everywhere a living issue, is of the most immediate and vital importance among the miners. It is a real fighting issue against the employers and the official union leaders. Approximately 50 per cent of both hard and soft coal miners are now unemployed. Starvation is stalking all the mining districts. The reactionary union leaders, supporting the program of the employers, declare "there are 250,000 miners too many in the industry." As against this criminal betrayal, the opposition must organize a real fight to meet the unemployment problem around the issues of the six-hour-day and five-day-week, equal division of work, state relief for unemployment, etc.

The nationalization of industry also looms up in the sharpest manner among the miners. It also is a direct issue of struggle. In Illinois the employers are introducing machinery wholesale, forcing the union miners to produce two to five times as much coal for the same money. In the anthracite district the speed-up is being brought about in other forms. In both instances, with the life of the union threatened, the union officials are co-operating with the employers. The opposition movement, with its program of tonnage rates in Illinois and no speed-up in the anthracite and general policy of division of work, comes into direct and violent conflict with both the bosses and the union misleaders.

THE DANGER OF DUAL UNIONISM

The problem of dual unionism also looms up in various and complicated ways in the mining industry. The I. W. W. is in Colorado and is anxious to grow; the coal operators have launched a dual union in Missouri and Iowa; and widespread dual sentiment exists among the rank and file of the U. M. W. of A., who are deeply disgusted and incensed at the treachery of the union leaders. For a time, immediately after the spectacular beginning of the Colorado strike, which raised the I. W. W.'s prestige very high in the coal industry everywhere, the I. W. W. would have been able to lay the basis nationally for a dual union movement. But it was not alive to the situation. It made no national move and it soon lost its golden opportunity. The Save-the-Union committee, with its program of militant attack against the Lewis machine, gained almost complete ideological and organizational leadership over the opposition masses. Now this movement has the difficult task of ousting the corrupt Lewis bureaucracy (which will split the union if it can), and at the same time holding the vast mass of miners intact. It must rid the miners of their faker leaders, who refuse to obey any democratically expressed will of the membership, and

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simultaneously avoid a danger of two mass unions in the coal industry.

THE LABOR PARTY AND THE MINERS

The labor party, which is a matter still of propaganda in most sections of the labor movement, is a living issue among the miners, especially in Pennsylvania. In many localities the labor party takes on a real mass character and serves as the miners' party against the coal operators and their henchmen, the Lewis machine. In some places, where other forms of left wing organization have been difficult to build up, the labor party, in addition to functioning as the mass political party of the workers, has also served as an instrument of direct struggle in the union against the Lewis forces. In such cases it was a sort of combined trade union left wing and political party. A basic necessity for us in the coming election campaigns is to make a live political issue of the miners' grievances, and demands, not alone in our party's general program, but also directly for the building of the labor party.

The injunction menace is another issue that is now plaguing the whole trade union movement. Nowhere does it sharpen to such a point as in the coal industry. Never were such sweeping injunctions issued as in this present strike. The bureaucrats ofcourse make no effective resistance to them. The opposition movement is confronted definitely and widely with the imperative necessity of putting at once into practice the policy of mass violation, which it has done. This has greatly strengthened the strike and raised left wing prestige. At present writing even some of the conservative district officialdom have to give at least lip service to mass violation of injunctions, and even to mass picketing.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STRIKE RELIEF

The political importance of strike relief work has also been drastically illustrated in this strike. The Pennsylvania-Ohio committee has an enormous influence in the strike zone. The union officials, the coal operators, and the local arms of the government oppose it with a deep and abiding hatred. The bitter attacks made upon it by the Senate Investigation Committee testify eloquently to its splendid work among the miners. The great trouble was that the opposition forces did not become more active in relief work much sooner, during the several months when the union officials were doing absolutely nothing to feed the hungry strikers and their families.

The question of work among the youth, women, and Negroes is enormously emphasized in the strike and general union situation.

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The young workers, numerically very strong, play an increasingly important part. In the opposition forces, young miners make up the greater part of the active leadership. The militant part always played by the miners' womenfolk in strikes (and this one is no exception), stresses the vast importance of work among this section of the working class. One of the weaknesses of the opposition was especially in the women's department. This is also so in the case of Negro workers. Large numbers of Negroes are strikers, great numbers of others have been brought into the mines as strike-breakers, the whole question is raised in acute form. But little has been done to carry on work in this very important field.

Much depends for the future of the labor movement upon the outcome of the present struggle in the Miners Union. It is a key situation, a turning point in the history of the labor movement. Our Party is most vitally interested in bringing the historic struggle to a victorious conclusion. We must devote all the energy that we possibly can to the fight. In the past we have more than done our share in developing the movement, in analyzing its problems, in outlining its problems, and in leading and fighting its battles. It is a situation especially demanding the militant action of the left wing. But we must redouble our efforts. Our slogan must be "Everything for the Coal Miners."

And in fighting against Lewis and the coal operators, we must not forget the basic task of building our own Party. Never have we had a better chance for Party building than now in the coal industry. We must utilize it to the utmost. Out of this great struggle, among other substantial conquests of the miners, must come a strong miners' section of the Workers (Communist) Party.

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HOW LENIN WORKED

By N. KRUPSKAYA

In the development and extension of the cadre of leading Party officials, it is an important task to instruct these comrades in the organization of their theoretical work. It is an ABC truth that union work, agitation campaigns, work for the daily press, etc., must not be left to chance, but must be organized according to a carefully worked out plan. The theoretical work, on the contrary, which must not only supply the material for agitation and propaganda, but must also serve as a basis for determining political lines is regarded much more as a matter of chance inspiration, supplemented by improvisation. Lenin has given an apt example of how basically and conscientiously the theoretical work must be organized.

We want to devote special attention to this problem in the future in *The Communist* by running bibliographical material and special articles on these questions. We begin with an article written especially for this purpose by Comrade Krupskaya—Editor.

WHATEVER work Vladimir Ilyitch undertook, he always did it thoroughly. He himself did much of the preliminary rough work.

The more importance he attached to this or that work, the more attention he paid to all details.

As he saw how difficult it was in Russia at the end of the '90s to publish regularly an illegal newspaper, and as on the other hand he attached an enormous organisational and propagandist importance to an all-Russian newspaper which would deal from the Marxist viewpoint with all public events and facts and their bearing on the ever-growing labor movement, Vladimir Ilyitch, having selected a group of comrades, decided to go abroad and to organise there the publication of such a newspaper. *Iskra* was conceived and organized by him. Every issue caused, literally, birth pangs. Every word was carefully weighed. Another very characteristic detail: Vladimir Ilyitch read over himself the proofs of the whole newspaper, not because there was no one else to do it—I got used to that work very quickly—but because he was anxious that not the slightest mistake should slip in. First of all he read the corrected proof himself, then he gave it to me, and afterwards he looked through it again.

The same thing happened in regard to everything else. He spent much time over zemstvo (rural county council) statistics and their elaboration. There are many carefully written-out tables in his notebooks. In regard to figures, which he considered particularly important and weighty, he even verified the totals of already published tables. Careful verification of every fact and figure is characteristic of Ilyitch—he based all his deductions on facts.

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This endeavour to back every one of his deductions by facts is particularly noticeable in his early propagandist pamphlets: "On Fines," "On Strikes," "The New Factory Law." He does not force anything on the workers, he proves everything by facts. Some people thought that the pamphlets were verbose, but working men and women thought them very convincing. Lenin's fundamental work which he wrote in prison, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," contains much valuable material based on facts. Lenin, in whose life the study of Marx's "Capital" played such an enormous role, knew that Marx based his deductions on an enormous quantity of material borne out by facts.

Lenin did not depend on his memory, although it was first-rate. He never expounded facts from memory, "approximately"; he expounded them with the utmost exactitude. He looked through heaps of material (he read and wrote very rapidly), but he always made notes of anything he wanted to memorize. He left much material in his notebooks. Once, when he was looking through my pamphlet "Organization of Self-Education," he said that I was not right in saying that notes should be made only of the most necessary things—his experience was different. He used to look over his notes often, as shown by marginal remarks, underlinings, etc.

If the book was his own he limited himself to underlining and marginal remarks, marking on the cover only the page, and underlining the most important parts. He used to read over also his own articles, making notes to them. He underlined any paragraph or sentence which gave him a new idea and marked the page on the cover. This is how Ilyitch organized his memory. He always remembered exactly what he had said, under what circumstances and in discussion with whom. We meet with very few repetitions in his works, speeches and articles. It is true that in the course of years we meet the same fundamental thoughts in Ilyitch's articles and speeches. That is why all his sayings bear the imprint of something steadfast and whole. However, we do not meet with ordinary repetition of what was said before. The same fundamental thought is applied to new conditions, to another concrete situation, and throws light on the question from another side. I remember a conversation I had with Ilyitch. He was already ill. The talk was about some volumes of his works which had just been published; I said that they reflected the experience of the Russian revolution and that it is of the utmost importance to make this experience accessible to foreign comrades, that these volumes should be used to show how the fundamental idea is inevitably treated in different ways, always commensurate with changes in the concrete historical situation.

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Ilyitch instructed me to find a comrade who would do this work. However, this has not yet been done.

Lenin studied carefully the experience of the revolutionary struggles of the world proletariat. This experience is brilliantly expounded in the works of Marx and Engels. Lenin read them over and over again, at every stage of our revolution. Everyone knows what an enormous influence Marx and Engels had on Lenin. But it would be very useful to find out in what way the study of their works helped Lenin to appreciate at their right value current events and prospects of development, at every stage of our revolution. Such research work has not yet been done, and yet it would show so clearly what role the experience of the world revolutionary movement played in Lenin's prophetic prognostications. Such a work would give a great deal to all who are interested in the way Lenin worked, how he read Marx and Engels and what he borrowed from them for his leadership and appreciation of our struggle. It would show what enormous influence the experience of the revolutionary struggle of the working class of the economically more developed countries had on our revolutionary movement. Such a work would enable people to realize that the Russian revolution, our whole struggle and construction are part and parcel of the struggle of the world proletariat. Such a work would show *what* and *how* Lenin borrowed from the experience of the international struggle of the proletariat and how he applied this experience. It is from Lenin that we can learn this.

Lenin was passionately interested in the study of the experience of the struggle of the international proletariat. It is difficult to imagine a more "anti-museum" person than Lenin. The hotch-potch character of museum material always wearied Vladimir Ilyitch; after ten minutes of it he had the look of someone utterly exhausted. I remember so well our visit to an exhibition of the revolution of 1848 organized in two small rooms of a working-class quarter of Paris famous for its revolutionary struggles. It was a sight to see Vladimir Ilyitch studying with the utmost interest and attention, even the least detail. To him this was a live piece of the struggle. When I visited our "Revolutionary Museum" I visualized Ilyitch and his absorption in every detail.

Ilyitch himself wrote more than once *how* one has to utilize the experience of the revolutionary struggle of the international proletariat. I remember one of his sayings. Kautsky had written a pamphlet on the occasion of the Russian revolution in 1905 entitled *Driving Forces and Prospects of the Russian Revolution.* Ilyitch was very well pleased with this pamphlet and had it trans-

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lated immediately. He corrected every sentence of the translation, wrote a passionate foreword to it, instructed me to have the pamphlet published immediately and himself looked through all the proofs. I remember how our big legal printing press took three whole days to set the type of the small pamphlet, how I had to sit there all these days waiting hours for the proofs. Ilyitch had the gift to inspire with his own enthusiasm those who surrounded him. After he had told me all the thoughts which Kautsky's pamphlet had evoked and after he had written his foreword to it, I felt that, for the time being, I must give up everything and sit in the printing room until the pamphlet was ready. Strange to say, even now, more than twenty years after the event, I associate in my memory the grey cover, the type and printing mistakes of the pamphlet produced under the then haphazard methods of our technique, with Ilyitch's passionate speeches and the concluding words of his foreword to this pamphlet:

> "In conclusion a few words about 'authorities.' Marxists cannot share the usual viewpoint of an intellectual radical with his abstract notion, 'no authorities.' No, the working class which carries on throughout the world a difficult and stubborn struggle for full emancipation must have authorities—but of course, only in the sense that young workers need the experience of old *fighters* against oppression and exploitation, fighters who have carried out many strikes, have participated in a series of revolutions and have learned wisdom from revolutionary traditions and a broad political outlook, etc."

In his foreword, Ilyitch raises his voice passionately against the application of old measures to new situations. We know that in his estimate of the revolution of 1917, Kautsky showed himself incapable of understanding the new situation and new problems and became a renegade as a result of this.

A characteristic feature of Leninism is—capacity to study and understand new situations and problems on the basis of the experience of the revolutionary struggle of the world proletariat, and to apply the Marxist method to the analysis of new concrete situations. Unfortunately, not enough light has been thrown on this side of the question on the basis of concrete facts.

There is also another side of the Leninist method of appreciating revolutionary events which has been left even more in the dark,—I mean capacity to visualize concrete reality and to express the collective views of the struggling masses which, according to Lenin (see the same foreword to "*Driving Forces*") are decisive in all practical and concrete questions of our immediate policy. This question, however, must be the subject of another article.

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PRACTICAL PHASES OF THE LABOR PARTY CAMPAIGN

By JAY LOVESTONE

THE situation in Minnesota, involving the Party tactics in our Labor Party campaign, is a matter of importance far beyond a district scale. In countries like Great Britain, where our comrades have had years of experience with the Labor Party as a mass movement, such problems appear more acute. In America, where we do not yet have a Labor Party movement of mass character, our problems in this field tend to be more abstract.

In Minnesota, however, we have a concrete situation, where our Labor Party tactics are tested in our every-day relations with the labor movement as a whole. Let no one propose to transplant mechanically policies from England or anywhere else in our Labor Party campaign. For instance, it is already necessary for the British comrades, because of their objective conditions being far more revolutionary than ours, to carry on a merciless fight in increasing instances against the Labor Party. In the United States, we are obviously far behind as compared with Great Britain, in the question of the Labor Party movement.

Some comrades are of the opinion that the Central Committee is proposing a change of policy in the Labor Party campaign in Minnesota which will also be different from the general Labor Party policy of the Party. This is not true. We are proposing a correct application of our policy on the Labor Party question as unanimously adopted at the Fourth Convention of our Party held in Chicago in September, 1925; as unanimously adopted in the American Commission of the Communist International in 1927, and as unanimously agreed upon in the Plenum held last February. Of-course, we are now facing a new situation. Concretely, this situation involves our attitude and policies towards Shipstead, not as an individual, but as the symbol of certain class interests today, which are shaping the policies and practices and dominating the leadership of the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota. The Shipstead of 1928 is not the Shipstead of 1922. The objective conditions are different. In 1922, willy-nilly, Shipstead was a symbol in a measure, of revolt against the two old capitalist parties. Today, Shipstead is a symbol of betrayal in the Labor Party movement of the country as a whole. Shipstead never really was for a Labor Party. Today he is an energetic and dangerous enemy of the Labor Party movement and of the interests of the working class and exploited farmers.

We emphasize that we are discussing the Shipstead issue, not as

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an issue of the individual person, but as an issue involving the fundamental questions of relations of the Communist Party to a Labor Party. The policy the Central Committee is proposing will make clear to the masses of the country as a whole and to the workers and exploited farmers of Minnesota in particular, that we are the champions of a genuine Labor Party movement as distinct from and opposed to a third capitalist party and the two old capitalist parties, as well as distinct from a Communist Party.

The importance of the Minnesota situation can be gauged with some accuracy when we take note of the fact that the outlook for a Labor Party is steadily improving. This improvement is due primarily to the economic situation. The crisis in the coal industry, the grave situation among the agrarian masses, the general economic crisis, the increasing opposition to American imperialism, are among the basic factors making for a sharpening of the struggle of the workers, not only in the economic sense, but the deepening of these struggles sufficiently so as to give them a political character. The Central Executive Committee is optimistic regarding the prospects for development of a mass Labor Party, but the Central Executive Committee recognizes that we must distinguish between sentiment for a Labor Party and the unorganized strength of the movement for a Labor Party. There is today lots of sentiment in the country for a Labor Party, but the organizational strength of the Labor Party nationally is still far smaller than the sentiment. In Minnesota, the gap between sentiment and organizational strength of the genuine Labor Party elements is much smaller than in most of the sections where a Labor Party exists. All the more reason for our being extremely careful with our tactics.

The trade union bureaucracy, the official Labor leadership, is today far to the right of what they were in 1924, when they supported LaFollette. Very likely the dominant official trade union bureaucracy would not support officially even a petty-bourgeois party this year. They might endorse some people as individuals, just as Mr. Green recently endorsed Shipstead. But when the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. endorsed Shipstead, it emphasized the fact that it was an endorsement of him as a man and not as the representative of a Party opposed to the Democratic and Republican Parties. This endorsement by Mr. Green was one of the most dangerous blows hit at the Labor Party movement in recent years.

The Central Executive Committee considers the Labor Party campaign as a basic question of the Party. We have had no difference on the Labor Party question since this convention. Every motion has been unanimously adopted.

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LIMITATIONS OF THE LABOR PARTY

To us, the Labor Party is the most effective weapon for breaking down the prejudices against independent working class political action developed among the working masses through generations by the bourgeoisie. Today, the Labor Party is a further entering wedge into great masses of workers whom we have not been able to reach for the specific purpose of improving the conditions for the building of a mass Communist Party in the United States.

We recognize the limitations of a Labor Party. To us, the Labor Party is not an end in itself. Some comrades might say that we cannot build a mass Communist Party in the United States without first having a mass Labor Party. This concept is wrong. It is too static. We cannot work effectively for the building of a mass Communist Party today without working and fighting for the building of a mass Labor Party. In fact, conditions may develop in the United States which would prevent our ever having a Labor Party on so great a mass scale as they now have in England. Will anybody then say that we will therefore never have a mass Communist Party in this country? Is there any comrade going to take that position? Of course not! Such a position would be tantamount to stating that there will be no proletarian revolution in the United States, for we cannot have a proletarian revolution without having a mass Communist Party. It is true that we cannot work effectively today for the development of a mass Communist Party without working energetically for the development of a mass Labor Party. It is not the organization of the Labor Party as an end in itself, but the movement, the fight for the Labor Party, that interests us as builders of the Workers Party.

The five main limitations which we must keep in mind in our most energetic campaign for a Labor Party are:

1. The Labor Party is not a party of the most advanced and conscious militants in the working class. The other day I conferred with a progressive labor leader whom I consider the most clever and able individual that I have met in Labor party circles here for some time. Therefore this very individual is potentially dangerous in that tomorrow his policies may be against the interests of the workers and the very prestige which he has today, as well as his ability, will only serve to equip him better for the fight against the workers' interests if he should decide to break with us. This man has every vice that MacDonald has. He has every vice that the trained social reformers of Europe have. He has every vice which I think specifically American. Yet under the circumstances, we might have to support his candidacy on a Labor Party ticket. We enter the

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Labor Party campaign with no illusions about pessimism, social reformism, political corruption. But when we enter the Labor Party campaign, we hold on to our own weapons very firmly.

We should not speak of discipline in a Labor Party in the sense that we speak of discipline in a Communist Party. Revolutionary proletarian discipline is an essential prerequisite for a Communist Party. Without it we cannot have a Communist Party. But we cannot speak of discipline in this sense in the trade unions or the Labor Party, as we speak of discipline in a Communist Party. You cannot compare the two. Of course, in a general sense, we are advocating the idea of discipline among all organizations of the working class. But let no one compare the discipline of the Communist Party with that in non-Communist Party organizations.

2. The Labor Party is a federative body of organizations, political and economic, of the working class. It is not based on individual members.

3. We should not permit ourselves the luxury of entertaining illusions that the Labor Party can or will be the organization that will seize political power. The Labor Party will bring political treason rather than victory to the working class. Yet we are for a Labor Party today, but if we should entertain the idea that the Labor Party discipline is as high as ours and of the same type, then we would inevitably fall into the error of harboring notions that the Labor Party organization will serve as the instrument of the workers for the seizure of political power. On the basis of such false premises, we would be bound to get into the most serious errors that Communists can commit.

4. We must remember that the Labor Party is merely the next big forward step in the development of our working class politically. The building of a Labor Party, the campaign for it, is of tremendous value in the building of a mass Communist Party in the United States. We must win the workers away from the Coolidges, the Hoovers, the Smiths. These spokesmen of the big bourgeoisie today have more workers following them than the Labor Party movement of this country will have for some time. Any measure which helps the development of a genuine Labor Party as we speak of it is a correct measure, provided the Labor Party is viewed not as an end but only as a next step, only as a means.

5. The Labor Party can and must be made to serve for advancing in some measure the interests of the working class, and as much as possible for impeding the political aggressiveness of the bourgeoisie. This we must keep in mind when we discuss Shipstead and whether we should support him. The Labor Party must be made to serve

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the advancement of the immediate interests of the working class, and to hinder the capitalists in their rule of the workers.

These are the yard-sticks which we apply to find out whether our policies are right or wrong in the Labor Party campaign and whether an organization parading as a Labor Party, is a genuine Labor Party, or whether a candidate of the Labor Party works for or against the genuine Labor Party.

LABOR PARTY AND THIRD PARTY

There is all the difference in the world between the third party and the Labor Party. A third party as we speak of it in the United States, and as its specifically and historically American connotation indicates, is a party of the petty-bourgeoisie, expressing the interests of the petty-bourgeoisie, dominated by the petty-bourgeoisie, and serving as a weapon of the petty-bourgeoisie against the parties of the big bourgeoisie. It is true there may be Labor Party elements supporting such a party, but these elements represent a class having interests fundamentally opposed to the interests of the petty-bourgeoisie. The Communist International in 1924 corrected the Party policy towards the LaFollette ticket. The decision of the Communist International against supporting the LaFollette ticket in 1924 was not a decision against supporting the third party in principle. We were not wrong in principle. We were wrong on the basis of the objective conditions in the country and on the basis of our extremely limited Party strength.

In the prevailing objective conditions, a third petty-bourgeois party would be the greatest obstacle to the development of a genuine Labor Party movement. The LaFollette Party did more to destroy the Labor Party movement by swallowing it for some time than some of the worst big bourgeois opponents did. In fact, it was the petty-bourgeoisie who served as the club, as the very engine of destruction, of the Labor Party movement in Minnesota in 1924. The situation has changed somewhat in Minnesota. Some of the leading Labor Party workers who in 1924 welcomed in a general way the LaFollette movement, confused it with the Labor Party and looked upon it as a movement which would bring immediate success, now realize that the LaFollette forces actually destroyed whatever chances the Labor Party had of victory in Minnesota in 1924. In a conversation with one of our Labor Party leaders today, I was told: "LaFollette defeated us here in the State in 1924." You comrades know and understand that well.

The outlook for a third party is a little better than the outlook for a Labor Party, but the danger we have today is not even the im-

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mediate organization of a third party. The real danger is that whatever third party sentiment we have, whatever third party leadership there is, will poison the existing Labor Party sentiment.

There have been negotiations amongst confused Farmer-Laborites looking forward to the nomination of Norris on a progressive ticket. This would be suicidal for the Labor Party movement. All such talk of Norris being honest personally is only that much balderdash. In capitalist politics, honesty is a secondary question. *The grave danger immediately confronting us* is that such elements as Shipstead who are really third party elements, or, more accurately, are nothing more than irregular Republicans—that such elements will have the leadership of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor movement.

If the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party is to become a genuine Labor Party, then such elements as represented by Mr. Shipstead must be driven out. So long as such third party elements are in the Minnesota Labor Party movement and dominate it, we cannot consider the Minnesota Labor Party as a genuine Labor Party. If we do not drive out such elements they will drive us out, even further than they have already done. You know that our Party as a Party has already been driven out in many cases. As a Party we are not affiliated with the Farmer-Labor movement. We have tended to accept this too easily. This extremely unsatisfactory condition is one of the most effective weapons in the hands of the third party forces represented by Shipstead for prevention of the development of a real Labor Party in Minnesota.

It might appear to some of us that a sharp fight against Shipstead would cause disruption in the ranks of the Farmer-Labor movement. Some of us might believe that such a fight would enable the trade union bureaucracy to denounce us as splitters. Let me say to you comrades that there is no worse blow we can help strike against the Labor Party movement, not only of Minnesota, but of the country as a whole, than our accepting Shipstead, than our failure to fight against him to a finish.

OBJECTIVES OF OUR LABOR PARTY CAMPAIGN

There are certain conditions which we must keep in mind in our participation in the Labor Party campaign. I have referred to the decision of the Fourth National convention of our Party. At this convention, we unanimously adopted a policy for a Labor Party, the basis of which is the following:

1. In all phases of the Labor Party campaign, our fundamental task is to utilize this campaign for the building of the Workers Party into a mass Communist Party. Now, comrades, this is not a

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shibboleth. This is not an abstraction. Anything which we do in the Labor Party campaign which objectively tends to hinder the building of a mass Communist Party is wrong. We must not do such things. We must not take such steps. We must not follow a line in our Labor Party tactics which directly or indirectly hinders the development of a mass Communist Party. Think of the Shipstead issue on the basis of this rule.

2. Our aim is to affiliate the trade unions and the other labor organizations, as organizations, to the Labor Party. And at the same time, we strive to draw individual militant workers from all these organizations into the Workers Party. Here I must admit that our Party as a whole has not made enough effort to exploit, has not made sufficient effort to utilize the Labor Party campaign and the other campaigns for the purpose of drawing members into our Party. If you find some militant worker in the Labor Party, please do not worry about his not yet having read Lenin's *State and Revolution.* This is very important, of course. No one can be a good Party member without understanding Lenin's *State and Revolution.* But we ask you not to worry about the insufficient understanding of Communism on the part of good, honest, militant workers, who are not yet Communists. Your job is to get such workers into the Party. Your job is to get in all such workers who are ready to fight against the bourgeoisie. Once such workers are in the Party, you will be able to make Communists of them in the sense of their really understanding Communism. We must do more than that. The Labor Party must serve as a recruiting ground for the Communist Party, and especially to attract American elements to our ranks.

3. Here is a key point. If we do not do this, then we will violate a fundamental principle of Communist tactics. *We must at all times maintain our organizational independence.* We must maintain our freedom of criticism, our own press and our own literature. For the sake of argument, let us assume that you endorse even the whole Farmer-Labor Party ticket in your state. How would you carry out your campaign? You would carry on the campaign as members of the Labor Party through the organizations with which you are affiliated. But above all our Party, as a Party, should have its own platform, its own speakers, its own agitation, its own meetings and literature. And in these meetings and this literature, in all of this propaganda of ours, we must point out not only the advantages of a Labor Party, but we must make clear also its serious limitations. We must not permit any illusions about a Labor Party while we are fighting for it.

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This is a hard job. It is a very hard job to put over successfully without any mistakes. But the fact that it is hard is no argument against it. We are bound to make mistakes in putting this over. The Party as a whole may have some mistakes in this field, but that does not deny the correctness of our policy as a policy. We must be very careful to prevent the development of any tendency in our ranks making even objectively for our Party losing its identity in the Labor Party campaign. When I speak of the Party maintaining its distinct position, particularly at this time in the developing radicalization of the labor movement I do not wish in any sense to exaggerate this radicalization. It is still largely local. It is not yet national. It is not yet fused on a national scale. We have radicalization in the mining industry. The trend is sharp. Likewise in the boot and shoe, in the textile, and in the needle trades. But we do not yet have a mass radicalizing development in the building trades, steel, or in the transportation industries. There are scores of industries where the workers are not yet awake to the extent they are in some of the others. Yet the process towards radicalization is here, is growing and indisputable. Therefore, especially at this time, we maintain our distinct Party position.

4. We must try to secure the Labor Party endorsement of some of our Party campaigns. I maintain our Party has not yet done that. For instance, we have a campaign against the imperialist war danger. We go to the trade unions to mobilize them for this campaign. We go to the cooperatives. We go to the exploited farmers' organizations, to the workers' benefit and educational societies, to the Labor Party. We have not yet succeeded in getting a single Labor Party local or organization to endorse this campaign. You might say that this is not necessarily a mistake. Comrades, the mistake is not to be found in the fact that we may not as yet have secured such endorsement of our anti-war danger campaign, but the mistake is that we have not tried enough to secure such endorsements for any of our campaigns. Defeat by itself is not necessarily proof of a mistake. The guarantee of success by itself is not a necessary prerequisite for the correctness of a policy. Effort in a certain direction is absolutely necessary, however. In this sense, our Party has not done enough.

5. We must carry on in the Labor Party campaigns, persistent agitation and propaganda to recruit the best members for the Communist Party. The Labor Party at best is only a means to an end. Undoubtedly if the Labor Party assumes a mass character and wins political influence, following and prestige, and our Party

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grows at the same time, we will come into clash with the Labor Party on many questions. Undoubtedly, we may have to fight against it, not only in electoral campaign, but in other struggles. But today, while we are still in the stage of building the Labor Party, while we are still in the stage of being the most energetic spokesmen for the Labor Party, is the best time to use the Labor Party as a recruiting field for membership in our Party.

CARE IN LABOR PARTY PROPAGANDA

A few more words about the limitations, and then the Minnesota situation specifically. Even in our most energetic participation in the Labor Party campaign, you must always place in the foreground the fact that the Workers Party is the only Party, the only class Party, of the revolutionary proletariat. In other words, if we publish literature for a Labor Party and that literature does not emphasize the fact that the Workers Party is the only class, the only revolutionary Party that can lead the workers to victory, we are not publishing literature that is fully correct in the Communist sense.

We must avoid a very serious error. This is the following: we must not connect the Labor Party with any aims achievable only by the Workers Party. Here we may make errors from the left as well as from the right. For instance, it would be sheer folly for us to go into a Labor Party convention and there put up a Communist program for adoption. This is not Communism. Such tactics are suicidal to the development of our Party. Shall we put up a resolution for the proletarian dictatorship? No, nonsense! And from the right: remember that such slogans as nationalization of the mines, nationalization of the railways, public ownership of public utilities—such slogans are very dangerous. While we accept these slogans in a Labor Program, and do not break with the Labor Party for all that, we must at the same time, on our own platform, never fail to point out that there can be no genuine nationalization without a working-class government, without a proletarian dictatorship. It is one thing for a Labor Party to speak of nationalization of the coal mines, for instance, but it is another thing for the Communists at this time to call upon the American Government, which more than any other government in the world represents a merging of the state bureaucracy with the leaders of industry—Mellon, Hoover, Dawes, such big bourgeois figures dominate the government—to speak at this time in the imperialist stage, when we have such a gigantic government apparatus, when the government is so obviously and openly a strike-breaker, when the very men who

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dominate industry and finance dominate the government directly—to speak of nationalization of basic industries under such conditions, on a Communist platform, would be ridiculous and most dangerous.

We have made mistakes in this sense in the recent past. We must avoid their repetition. Some comrades might say: What is happening to our Party? Are we swinging to the left? I want you to avoid such theories of the Party mechanically swinging here or there—now going to the right, then to the left, back again, and so forth. We are not a paper organization, blown by winds. The notion that the Party is now mechanically swinging to the left is rank idiocy. The Party is adjusting itself and its tactics to the objective conditions. We recognize the fact that there is developing a trend towards sharpening class conflicts. Yet, for us in America, to apply tactics suitable to a revolutionary situation, would be wrong, would be criminally anti-Communist. For us in America to issue slogans based either on a revolutionary situation, or even on an extremely radical situation of national dimensions, would be the most foolhardy step we could take. But for us to recognize that the government today is not what it was before it entered the world war, and to frame our program accordingly, is Leninist realism. This fact we must never lose sight of in our Labor Party campaign. From the right we must not develop illusions among the workers. From the left we must not expect from the Labor Party, Communist programs or Communist policies.

THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNIST CANDIDATES

In the Labor Party and in the election campaign, we must always remain an independent force. This means more than our own agitation and speakers. It also means that wherever possible, we should nominate candidates on our own Workers Party ticket. Wherever we can possibly run a Workers Party candidate, we should do so. Some comrades might say we should put forward a Workers Party ticket only where we have no mass support, and stand no chance of interfering with the Labor Party. Such a policy is wrong. We reject unreservedly any proposal aiming to have the Party run its own candidates only where it has no mass support. Particularly in places where we have mass support, must we run Communist candidates. In those places where the trade union movement is weak, it is also important to put forward our own candidates. Concretely, in the city of Detroit, which is probably the most highly industrialized city in the country, and where the trade union movement is desperately weak, there especially must we run our own

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candidates. We should always have a Communist candidate wherever we have mass support or sufficient support.

How about Communist condidates on the Labor Party ticket? Shall we have candidates who are Communists run on the Labor Party ticket? Our object is to have as many Communists run on the Labor Party ticket as possible. When I say as possible, I speak of chances for their being nominated, elected, and aiding in mobilizing masses. We do not proceed mechanically. We do not put forward this proposal with the objective of trying to grab offices. This is not our interest in the superficial sense. If you want to ask me, should we, under the specific objective conditions in Minnesota, with the present weakness of our Party forces here, put up a Communist candidate as our first choice in opposition to Shipstead as United States Senator on the Farmer-Labor Party ticket, I would say no. I say no, not because I do not want a Communist, but simply because we do not have any Communist who can mobilize enough masses and strength to defeat the Shipstead nomination in the primaries, or in this convention. I wish we did have such a comrade, and that our party had already so much influence that we could make a fight to have a Communist run on the Labor Party ticket for the United States Senate, because he would at this time get greater mass support, reach a wider field, than our own Party ticket. Of course, if we cannot find a genuine left-wing or progressive trade union worker to oppose Shipstead for the candidacy of Senator either in the convention or in the primaries, then we should contest Shipstead's nomination through an energetic support of the Communist candidate in the Labor Party primaries. If we fail in the Labor Party primaries then we must put up a Communist Party opponent against Shipstead.

Let me emphasize at this point that we go along with the Labor Party despite all its shortcomings. I repeat that because I do not want the comrades to get the notion that the Central Executive Committee is proposing to drop the Labor Party because it emphatically points out the shortcomings and mistakes of this movement.

THE SITUATION IN MINNESOTA

1. In Minnesota, our Party must prepare at once to put our Communist presidential candidates on the ballot. The Party must make every effort to get on the ballot in Minnesota as a distinct Party without delay. I am not speaking now of the state ticket. Satisfactory arrangements may be made whereby we would support—except for Shipstead or any other third party type—the rest of the state Farmer-Labor ticket. You must keep in mind all the

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technical requirements set down by your state laws in filing the Communist Party ticket. The Central Committee has decided that insofar as the election laws require the declaration by our Party of its national presidential candidates, the districts are to place on the ballot Comrades Foster and Gitlow, the same as in 1924. If later on there should develop a genuine Labor Party ticket or a united labor ticket, we would then be in a position, if necessary, to withdraw our candidates, but the Party as a Party must be on the ballot in as many states as possible. Our influence in the Labor Party, in the working class as a whole, particularly in a country like the United States, is influenced in a substantial degree by our Party being on the ballot in as many states as possible. I could even cite states where the Party's being on the ballot has helped us maintain our right to work in the open.

Of course, it would be folly to think that merely being on the ballot is an insurance against being outlawed by the bourgeoisie. When the class war is so sharp that the bourgeoisie want to outlaw us, and we then do not have enough strength in the labor movement to prevent our being outlawed, our being on the ballot is not going to be worth two cents. But today, it is still a factor, and it would be very bad for the Party if in a state like Minnesota, where we really have influence and are a force, we should not be on the ballot. The recognition the Communists are receiving in Minnesota is not a personal matter, but is due entirely to the fact that our Party has some political power and influence in this state. This policy does not mean a dropping of the Labor Party ticket, or the slackening of our efforts for a united Labor Ticket. Quite the contrary. We must increase our efforts. But we must always be prepared to put our own candidates on the ballot and to campaign for them.

A few words about the collection of signatures to place the Party on the ballot. We believe that not only every state, but every city where we have a Party organization, must work to place the Party on the ballot. The signature campaign is a real campaign. It is not a paper campaign. It is all right if a worker says: "I will sign your petition, but I am not for Communism." We don't say to him: "We do not want your signature until you are for Communism." But we do not stop with him when he signs. We deposit a packet of literature with him. We talk to the worker. We talk to him in a way calculated not to irritate or insult him, but to draw him nearer to us and to convince him. Nine out of every ten workers may not respond, but the tenth worker may listen and may join the Party. The

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ten signatures are welcome, though only one of the ten signers may immediately join our Party.

The signature campaign, the petition campaign, can be made a genuine mass campaign. It can serve to increase the number of members participating actually in our Party work. It should involve every member of the Party. It should give us the opportunity to assign to every member of the Party a definite task of Communist propaganda.

2. If there are any candidates on the Farmer-Labor ticket who are objectionable to us, then we must vote against them. Some comrades seem to have the impression that if we are in the Labor Party, we must accept all candidates put up by the Labor Party. This is fallacious. This is not the Party policy. At best, even when we support the Labor Party candidates, we do so qualifiedly.

3. To us, the Labor Party movement is not a movement of abstractions. We want our comrades in the local labor organizations, or wherever nominations are to be made for the Labor Party ticket, or in the primaries. We want to have as many as possible of our leading active comrades, those who have standing in the labor movement, to be on the Farmer-Labor ticket. Party members who are members of the Labor Party representing other Labor organizations than the Party, must resolutely fight for their rights for nomination for public office on the Labor Party ticket, the same as any other Labor Party members. If nominated, our comrades will of course wage a Communist campaign.

This is a very hard proposition. It may entail serious difficulties for our comrades. In Great Britain, it has entailed expulsions. The British Labor Party has time and again adopted clauses aimed at the Communists. Yet somehow or other, the Communists manage to make their presence and strength felt in the Labor Party of England.

The question of Shipstead: How shall we handle the Shipstead situation? First of all, we do not propose that you should enter into a name-calling campaign. We do not ask that you call him "crook" or "traitor," but fight against his being in the Labor Party on the basis of his concrete acts of omission and commission.

The major attack against Shipstead is that he is an enemy of the Labor Party and the working class. We are not asking you to fight Shipstead because he is not a Communist. We are asking you to fight Shipstead because he is more a Republican than anything else, because he is obviously an enemy of the Labor Party movement. We must fight Shipstead as good members of the Labor Party. We fight Shipstead because we represent the interests of the

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working class in the Farmer-Labor Party bloc of Minnesota. There is lots of talk of Shipstead filing on the Republican ticket, or as an independent. This talk is significant. Shipstead is a careerist. He is a petty-bourgeois adventurer who is knifing the interests of the working class at every opportunity he gets. That is precisely the reason why he has had and still has nothing to do with the Labor Party. His latest claim is that he represents the people and not any one party of Minnesota. The campaign against Shipstead must be waged along the following lines:

1. His brazen and persistent opposition to the development of a genuine Labor Party in Minnesota and nationally.

2. His continuous association with and repeated support of the reactionary Republican caucus dominating the Senate. Recall the fact that Shipstead, along with the so-called insurgents, voted for Wall Street's Old Guard in the organization of the Senate. Shipstead has been enjoying the luncheons with the oily President Coolidge.

3. His outright surrender to the imperialists on the question of Nicaragua. Shipstead as a member of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee voted along with Borah and the regular Republicans and Democrats for the maintenance of the American marines in Nicaragua to "supervise the elections." Here we must especially draw your attention to the fact that Shipstead has received far more than the ordinary confidence of the Sandino forces resisting American imperialism. Yet this is his reply.

4. We must point out the fraudulent character of the much-vaunted anti-injunction bill introduced by Shipstead and approved by Messrs. Green and Woll. This is a fake anti-injunction bill. Even such a notorious open-shopper as ex-Governor Grosback of Michigan, now attorney of the State Federation of Labor of Michigan, has declared that this bill introduced by Shipstead is in reality not an anti-injunction bill.

There can be nothing better happening in Minnesota towards the development of a genuine Labor Party than Shipstead's being thrown out of and by the Labor Party, rejected, or his running on the Republican ticket or as an independent. The best thing that Shipstead could do for the Labor Party is to leave it. The best thing that we can do for the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota is to repudiate and drive out Shipstead and all the third party elements.

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AMERICA *and the* TACTICS *of the* COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

By JOHN PEPPER

THE last plenary session of the Executive Committee of the Communist International initiated many important changes in the tactics of the Comintern. The British, French, and Chinese problems, the question of Russian and international Trotskyism and the trade union question, in connection with preparations for the World Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions, were in the forefront of the discussions of the Ninth Plenum.

The analysis of the Chinese situation and the policies of the Communist Party of China were considered in general on the same basis as outlined in my article, "After the Canton Uprising" (March issue of *The Communist*).

The Comintern considered the problems of the most important European countries in their concrete manifestations, and tried to meet the issues of each individual country in the most concrete, realistic way. At the same time we have to state that, on the whole, the policies of the Comintern showed a marked general tendency to the left—as expressed in the resolutions of the last plenum—a marked tendency to sharpen the tactics of the Communist parties of Europe.

In Great Britain an abrupt turn against the Labor Party on the whole front; in France the sharpest struggle possible not only against the petty-bourgeois left bloc but also against the Socialist Party; in Germany the intensification of the fight against the Social-Democratic Party and trade-union leadership; relentless struggle against Russian and international Trotskyism, not as an ultra-left tendency but as a right-wing Social Democratic deviation; a general sharpening of Communist tactics on the trade union field; not so much united front on the top, but all emphasis on the united front from below with the masses; not so much driving the trade-union leadership to lead the economic struggles of the workers, but rather a strike strategy by which the Communists seek to gain leadership in all economic movements and strikes of the organized workers; continuation of Communist activities in the existing trade unions, but at the same time in a whole series of countries the main emphasis on the broadest masses of unorganized workers; penetration of the old trade unions, but at the same time organization of new unions—these are the most important changes in the policies of

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the Communist International in 1928. To sum up briefly: the Ninth Plenum of the Comintern represents a general turn to the left in the European tactics of the Communist International.

WHAT THE LEFT TURN MEANS

Two questions arise for us American Communists in connection with the last plenum of the Communist International:

1. Is the general turn to the left in the policies of the Communist International justified by objective conditions in Europe?

2. Does that left turn in Europe mean necessarily a sharp turn to the left on the part of the Communist Party of America?

The years 1928 and 1929 will be years of general elections in Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States of America. What will be the tactics of the Communist International in the coming elections in Germany, France, and Great Britain? The Communist International will emphasize the independent role of the Communist parties in these countries, will emphasize the necessity of drawing a clear-cut dividing line between the Communist parties on the one hand and all other parties—capitalist as well as Social-Democratic or Labor parties—on the other hand. The tactics of the Comintern will be against any bloc of the Communist parties of Germany, France, and Great Britain with the Social Democratic or Labor Parties of these countries.

Up until now the Communist Party of Great Britain supported the Labor Party in its election campaigns. Of course, it was always a qualified support. The British Communists supported the Labor Party candidates as "the rope supports the hanged man."

In France, likewise, the practice of the Communist Party was to try to form a united front not only with the rank and file of the Socialist Party but also with its leaders; and there were situations in which our Party even went so far as to support the candidates of the Socialist Party and of the petty-bourgeois left bloc against the right wing of the bourgeoisie around Poincaré.

In Germany in the last presidential elections, in which the issue "monarchy vs. republic" played a big role, the policy of the Comintern was to try to form a bloc with the Social Democrats and trade unions to put up a working-class candidate against Hindenburg. The Communist Party of Germany itself (then under the ultra-left leadership of Ruth Fischer and Maslov) followed a different policy, and became in many respects isolated from the masses of the working class, due to the fact that it appeared as the disrupter of the forces of the working-class united front. It was even dubbed a helper of Hindenburg and his monarchist followers.

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A NEW WORLD SITUATION

In 1928 there will be a complete break with these former policies, and the Communist parties of France, Germany, and Great Britain will not make any election alliances with the Social Democrats, with the Labor Party, and even less with any petty-bourgeois left bloc. Why? What are the reasons for this change? What were the factors in the situation which necessitated such a change in our policies? It is necessary to enumerate at least the most important of these factors:

1. Capitalism is on the down-grade in Europe. The crisis in European imperialism is especially acute in Great Britain.

2. A growing tendency towards State Capitalism is in evidence in a whole series of important countries.

3. The war danger is growing, and an increased tension is manifest in all foreign relations due to the ever greater competition for markets.

4. The general trend of the European working class is to the left. The workers of Great Britain, robbed of all their privileges of the previous period, are suffering from unemployment and general insecurity of living conditions, and have learned much from their experiences in the General Strike, the Miners' Strike, etc. The working class of Germany went through a whole series of economic crises and unemployment periods; and now after a brief period of capitalist prosperity, is again experiencing a new, sudden wave of unemployment. The French working class has been suffering all the tortures of inflation and deflation. There is a growing discontent developing among the masses throughout Europe. At the same time the whole leadership of the European Social Democratic parties, as well as of the Labor Party, is showing a marked tendency to go further to the right. There was never a more treacherous period in the whole history of reformist leadership than at the present time in Europe.

5. The working class of Europe has had a great deal of experience during the last few years with all kinds of Social-Democratic, petty-bourgeois left bloc, and Labor Party governments. All of these governments without exception betrayed the working class, did not accomplish anything towards improving the material conditions of the masses, in every respect served the interests of the bourgeoisie, were unable to relieve the tension in the international situation, and continued the imperialist policies of the capitalists against disarmament and for economic and military competition.

6. The Social-Democrats in France and Germany, as well as the heroes of the Labor Party in Great Britain, are promising the

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workers "left-wing" victories in 1928 and 1929. They are bragging already that 1928 will be a "left year." They are trying to create the illusion that in France the elections will again sweep into power the petty-bourgeois left bloc, which will form an alliance with the Social-Democrats. In Germany they forecast the defeat of the present bourgeois coalition and the victory of the Social-Democratic and so-called democratic-bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties. The whole policy of the British Labor Party consists today in promising the victory of the Labor Party in the next general elections and the cleaning-out of the Baldwin Government through parliamentary means. There are possibilities of a new "lib-lab" situation, of a McDonald-Lloyd George coalition movement, as the outcome of the next elections.

In earlier situations it was necessary that the Communists should "support" the Social-Democrats in Germany, the Socialists in France, and the Labor Party in Great Britain in their attempts to get into "power." It was necessary because that was the only way to show the masses—the masses never can learn through propaganda alone but through their experience—that all these heroes of reformism, upon attaining power, do nothing for the working class and betray the interests of the masses in every respect. Today there is no need to repeat that demonstration, because all these Social-Democratic, Socialist, and Labor Party leaders have already been in power once and have unmasked themselves to a great extent in the eyes of the masses.

THE GROWTH OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES

7. A few years ago in most of the European countries we had only small Communist parties, which did not have the possibilities of reaching broad masses, which were not able to gain the attention of the working class. It was necessary at that time for the Communists, if they wanted any connection with the masses, to appear before the working class as "supporters" of those reformist, Socialist, and labor parties which at the time had the confidence of the workers. Today there is a marked change in this respect. The Communist Party of Germany is already a powerful mass party. In France our Party has become a mass party in the last few years. Even in Great Britain, though the Communist Party is still numerically weak, the Communist Party plus the Minority Movement represents a sufficient mass basis to go forward against the Labor Party on the whole front. The more likelihood there is that there will be a so-called "left year" in Europe, the more important it is for the Communist parties to establish themselves as independent

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forces, as the only revolutionary forces, as the only true revolutionary parties of the working class, as the revolutionary opposition to all these future sham working-class governments. The more likelihood there is that there will be a so-called "left year" in Europe, the more necessary it is that the Communist parties should see clearly that their struggle must be directed against two enemies: not only against the parties and governments of the bourgeoisie but also against the parties and governments of the various Social-Democrats and laborites.

LABOR PARTY TACTICS IN AMERICA

Now as to the situation in America: Do the new policies of the Communist International for the European countries mean necessarily the application of the same policies to America? Can we apply in a mechanical way the European policies of the European Communist parties to American conditions? Is it necessary to make a general shift in the policies of the Communist Party of America to the left? In other words, to put the question more concretely, shall we abandon the present Labor Party policy of the Communist Party of America or not?

The only way to give a correct answer to these questions is to analyze the present American situation. If the present American situation is on the whole the same as the present European situation, then certainly there should be no marked difference between the above-outlined European policies and the policies we should follow in America. But if there is a basic difference between European and American conditions at present, then it would be a major mistake to apply thoughtlessly, in a mechanical way, European policies to basically different American conditions.

An analysis shows that conditions in America are basically different from those in Europe. It is not necessary for me to give a detailed analysis of the American situation, because that was given in the last thesis of the Comintern on America and in the careful and detailed analysis of the thesis of the February plenum of the Central Executive Committee of the American Party. Here I shall point out only some of the fundamental differences between the present European and American situations:

1. American capitalism is still on the up-grade as compared with European capitalism.

2. American imperialism is still increasing in power on almost every front of world politics—a striking contrast to the status of British imperialism.

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3. The American working class as a whole is in a privileged position compared with the European working class. America has the largest stratum of labor aristocracy. In no other country is there such a gap between the upper stratum of the working class and the true proletarian masses.

4. The American working class has not yet any mass political party of its own; its bulk still adheres to the capitalist parties. The working class of America has not yet reached that stage of class-consciousness and homogeneity which is the prerequisite of constituting itself as an independent political factor.

5. There is no marked tendency of a left trend on a national scale in the American working class.

The five factors enumerated above are fundamental factors of the present American situation. Not to see them would amount to political blindness; to be afraid to face them would amount to political cowardice. If these five factors alone constituted the situation which serves as a basis for all the activities of the Communist Party of America, then we should be compelled to draw very definite conclusions in shaping our policies. Such a situation would greatly restrict the activities of a Communist Party in America. To meet such a situation the main policy of the Communist Party of America would have to be the carrying out of Communist propaganda (at the same time, of course, participating in all activities of the working class wherever possible). To express it boldly: in such a situation the Communist Party of America would be able to exist only as a mere propaganda society. If such were the case, then certainly there would be no place for any Labor Party slogan. We should not forget that the Labor Party policy, as carried out in the years 1922-24, was based on two conditions:

1. The general political backwardness of the American working class. The Labor Party slogan had the function of a bridge between the backward masses and the Communist Party.

2. The general fermentation of the American working class in the war and post-war period, which manifested itself in the big strikes of 1919 and 1922 as well as in the mass Labor Party movements of 1922-1924.

It would be a mistake to think that the political backwardness of the American working class alone served as the basis for our Labor Party policy. It is quite true that the Labor Party slogan would have been useless, if there had been any possibility of getting the masses of the working class directly into the Communist Party; but we should not forget that the Labor Party slogan would have been equally futile, if there had not been already a deep-going fer-

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ment in the broad masses of the working class, if these masses had not already begun to orientate themselves away from the capitalist parties. No Labor Party slogan is necessary in those countries in which the bulk of the working class has already left the camp of the capitalist parties. No mass Labor Party organization is possible under conditions in which the confidence of a broad stratum of the masses in capitalist parties has not yet been shaken. In the period of 1925-27 there was an almost general depression in the American labor movement. Therefore, the slogan of the Labor Party remained correct as a *propaganda slogan*, but it could not fulfill its function as a *slogan of action.*

NEW FACTORS IN AMERICA

The five factors listed above do not constitute a complete analysis of the present American situation. In addition to them there are other important factors determining the situation in the United States which create sufficient possibilities for real mass work on a large scale on the part of the Communist Party at the present time. Without trying to analyze them fully, I shall enumerate these additional factors:

1. The aggressive imperialist policies of the United States are creating many complications in world politics, and it is inevitable that these complications will reflect themselves in the internal situation of the country as well. United States imperialism is becoming ever more the dominating factor in Latin America, pushing out Great Britain to a growing extent in the Latin American countries; but the very success of the United States calls for a growing resistance on the part of the Latin American countries against United States imperialism. The increasingly aggressive participation of the United States in world politics makes necessary the building up of an extensive navy and merchant fleet at the expense of the State. The increasing export of capital is creating a tendency to break down the present high wall of "protective" tariff. A lowering of the tariff would have as a necessary sequence the breaking down of the present prohibition of immigration of labor, which would mean taking away the most valuable privilege of the American labor aristocracy. There is already a marked tendency of large strata of workers, farmers, and petty-bourgeois elements to resist imperialist aggressiveness.

2. The first violent stage of the agricultural crisis has been liquidated by the ruining of hundreds of thousands of farmers and the driving of a farm population of one million into the cities, but it would be wrong to say that there is no agricultural crisis in

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America today. The basic reason for the agricultural crisis is the existence of the most monopolistic trusts in the world on the one hand and the unorganized, atomized status of the technically backward masses of farmers on the other.

3. The very technical and organizational progress of industries calls for partial crises (tetile, shoe, mining, needle trades), which stir up broad strata of workers. The industrialization of the South, which tends to create a new industrial center in the southern part of the United States, spells unemployment, wage cuts, and general insecurity of living for hundreds of thousands of workers in New England. The crisis in the mining industry serves as the basis of a general fomentation among the 800,000 coal miners, bringing about such a radicalization of the workers in the coal mines that it can become the starting point of a general radicalization process of the workers in other basic industries.

4. The present economic depression has already created mass unemployment on a large scale. The unemployed workers are living today on their savings, but these savings cannot last forever, and prolonged unemployment will mean more suffering to the bulk of the unskilled workers here than in any other country due to the lack of any kind of social insurance. Not only the whole industrial life but the private households of millions of workers are based on installment buying, and an industrial crisis and a prolonged period of unemployment would mean not only the stopping of wages but the shaking of the very foundations of each working-class household.

5. The centralization and bureaucratization of the United States Government is making headway all the time. The Government apparatus is in a growing degree and ever more frankly becoming merged with the apparatus of finance capital and big business. Every strike movement tends to bring home to the workers the strike-breaking role of the Government, which uses its full power (and that power is today the most powerful State apparatus in the world) to crush the simplest, most modest and insignificant strike movements of all categories of workers. Manifold tendencies of a special type of State Capitalism manifest themselves in America to an increased extent.

The five decisive factors just enumerated represent tendencies which counteract the first five factors analyzed. If we attempt to summarize the effect of all these above-analyzed tendencies and counter-tendencies of the situation in the United States, we must come to the following conclusions: On the one hand, there is no need to push the Communist Party back into a mere propaganda

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stage, because there is a sufficiently broad basis for immediate mass work of a revolutionary working-class political party. On the other hand, there does not exist such a marked general trend to the left on a national scale in the working class which would create the immediate possibility of getting really large strata of the working class directly into the Communist Party.

We are now going through a period of transition. The Labor Party slogan will, in all likelihood, not be transformed into a slogan of action in 1928, but it certainly will play a central rôle as a propaganda slogan this year, and it has prospects of fulfilling the functions of a slogan of action in the not far distant future. At present we have a period of transition. On the one hand, our analysis cannot be based only on the fact of imperialist prosperity in America; on the other hand, we cannot yet speak of any general left trend of the working class. In this period of transition the Labor Party will play all the more important a role, because there are no signs now of the setting up of a petty-bourgeois third party as we had in the form of the LaFollette movement in 1924, and because it becomes more and more clear that a Labor Party in America can be built only against the opposition of the American Federation of Labor and Socialist Party leadership. There is no need to revise the policies of the Comintern or the Communist Party of America on the Labor Party. The only political issue of the ruling Republican Party today is "Prosperity." Economic life as it exists—not in the propaganda sheets of the capitalists but in reality—has already replaced prosperity by depression. If the present depression is deepened into a prolonged crisis, it will mean the creation of a broad mass basis for a Labor Party, a Labor Party behind which the Communist Party will be the driving and organizing force.

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"PRIDE GOETH BEFORE A FALL"

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AL SMITH *and the* NEW TAMMANY HALL

By WILLIAM W. WEINSTONE

TAMMANY HALL is offering its "favorite son" to the nation, and the Democratic Party is hailing this gift of Tammany. Tammany Hall in years past, because of its notorious record of open graft and corruption, its strong local orientation and other special characteristics, was looked upon almost as an organization apart from the Democratic Party. On the other hand, the Democratic Party, in order to secure its support without tainting itself before the public, helped to maintain the fiction that the ways of Tammany were peculiar to itself and that it was foreign to the Democratic Party as a whole.

How comes it that Tammany has now planted its flag in the heart of the Democratic Party, and Democrats from all parts of the nation are rallying to its banner? What has transpired to make the political spokesman of Tammany Hall become the most popular son of the Democratic Party as a whole? And what miracle has transpired that the slogan, "Honesty in government," could be similarly proposed as the rallying cry for this candidate of Tammany Hall for the presidency of the United States?

The answer to these questions will be found in the fundamental changes that have taken place within the country with the advent of imperialism and the consequent reflection of these changes within the capitalist class, within Tammany Hall, and within its national organization, the Democratic Party.

OLD AND NEW TAMMANY HALL

Tammany Hall has changed within the course of the last two decades and has virtually become a New Tammany Hall. In the course of this period it has been undergoing substantial changes in its social composition, political policies and organizational structure. The process of trustification of industry, the establishment of the monopoly of finance capital in industry and government, has operated to change the character of this political body from a party largely reflecting the interests of the petty-bourgeoisie into an organ of big capital admirably suited to the special political, economic and social needs of the financial oligarchy that rules America today.

The old Tammany Hall, established in 1789, in the post-revolutionary period, was conceived as an instrument of struggle against

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the aristocratic bourgeoisie, fought against Hamilton and Madison in their Federalist policies of centralizing the government, subscribed to the philosophy of Jefferson and stood for the widest democratization (in the bourgeois sense) of the political life of the nation. In 1793 it hailed the success of the revolutionary armies of France and in its toasts called for "wisdom, concord and firmness" to the French convention. In the period after the Civil War it was loud in its denunciations of the growing power of the trusts and fulminated against the "invisible power" developing in government.

NEW TAMMANY FOR CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT

The new Tammany Hall is the champion of the centralization of government, of the complete reorganization of county, city, state government (Smith's short ballot, executive budget, 4-year term for governor, etc.), and employs the traditions of Jefferson to conceal its close similarity to the party of the reactionary Coolidges and Kelloggs, and its Mayor Jimmie Walker, an habitué of New York night clubs, sets the fashion for the most aristocratic of the parasitic bourgeoisie and proclaims the new Tammany Hall with his thirty-nine pairs of spats on his trip to the South.

The new Tammany Hall has become the spokesman for "efficiency" in government, and in the violence of its regime in New York State against the needle trades workers, in the issuance of injunctions by Tammany Hall judges, in the clubbing and arresting of thousands of striking workers, it has written new pages in the history of the terrorism of the capitalist class against the workers.

The old Tammany Hall was vulgarly corrupt and its regime in office was one grand carnival of pilfering of the city's treasury and of petty corruption on all sides. It made notorious the so-called "honest graft" as a kind of graft which was permissible to the politicians that ruled the city. From the time of Boss Tweed, Tammany Hall was synonymous with indescribable graft and corruption. The bigger bourgeoisie, to reduce taxation consequent upon this reign of corruption, was compelled periodically to organize "reform" parties to put these petty grafters out of business.

MORE REFINED GRAFT METHODS

But Tammany Hall has now changed its ways. It has adapted its methods of corruption to the more refined ways of big industry, to the indirect methods of graft afforded by real estate speculation, by Tammany men becoming open or secret partners of Big Busi-

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ness, by speculations in stock markets—thus continuing to carry on shady deals but now disguised by the operations of Big Business in the same ways that the trusts cover up their fleecing of the public through the legal forms which serve this purpose. Tammany Hall takes its graft in millions through these indirect methods and its leaders have become part of the millionaire class against which they have railed so loudly in the past.

TAMMANY AND THE LABOR BUREAUCRACY

The old Tammany raised demagogy to a fine art. Many of its leaders, having risen from the "ranks," lived and mixed with the un-class-conscious masses, understood how to appeal to petty-bourgeois sentiments, knew how to do odd and trifling favors, and to make petty concessions of all sorts in order to secure mass support. Its leaders were the so-called "practical" men who refused to take note of the emergence of the labor movement and the social problems arising from the sharpening class lines. But demagogy as a weapon for deceiving the masses loses its effectiveness with continued use and the new Tammany Hall, taking cognizance of the existence of the labor movement, learned early that by drawing the labor bureaucracy into its political machinery it would be able to maintain domination over big sections of the masses. It has drawn these bureaucrats closely into its machine, rewarding them for their services in corralling the labor vote by sinecures in the city and state government. What the other capitalist parties generally were doing in the corruption of the labor bureaucracy, Tammany Hall developed into a fine system. These methods enabled Tammany Hall to still pose as a "friend" of Labor. It learned to speak of social problems and to deceive the organized labor movement by its demagogic phrases.

The old Tammany machine rested upon the rule of local district bosses who were able easily to marshal the voters because of the compactness of the city districts. With the growth of the city, the migration of the city population to various boroughs, the steady stream of labor immigrants into the United States, the proletarianization of the masses and the weakening of their middle-class ideology, these local bosses were steadily undermined, and greater power became concentrated in the hands of the central group of Tammany Hall. Simultaneously with these and other changes came the development of the business-man type of leader in Tammany, in the place of the former ward healer variety of leadership so characteristic of Tammany Hall. These changes levelled out the dif-

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ferences between Tammany and other sections of the Democratic Party and made it a "respectable" institution.

MONOPOLY RULE IN GOVERNMENT

Underlying all of these changes was the fact that monopoly has become the rule in industry. Lenin pointed out in his work on Imperialism, "the enormous dimensions of finance capital concentrated into a few hands, and creating extremely extensive net-work of close ties and relationships which influence not only the small and medium capitalists but also the very small—this on the one hand, and on the other the bitter struggle against other national state groups of financiers for the partition of the world and the right to rule over other countries—*these two factors taken together caused a complete conversion of all the possessing classes to the side of imperialism*" (emphasis mine— w. w. w.). This fundamental factor of imperialism has changed the social composition and outlook of the basis of Tammany Hall and has completely drawn Tammany Hall into the camp of imperialism.

REPUBLICAN AND TAMMANY ALIKE

The differences between the Republican Party and Tammany Hall in New York state have therefore completely disappeared. Traditional Tammany has still greater support from the petty-bourgeois elements than has the Republican Party but in all fundamental respects both are servants of the ruling group of finance capitalists of the country. As early as 1915, it was already apparent that the differences between the Republicans and Tammany had been wiped out, as was proved in the Barnes trial, to the extent of secret alliances being established between them for the domination of the city, and that the struggles between them were more in the form of verbal duels to conceal the growing identity of the interests and policies of these two capitalist parties.

DESTROYING THE HYLAN MACHINE

The war and post-war reaction wiped out these differences completely. It only remained for Tammany Hall to cleanse itself of the remnants and traditions carried over from this century-old organization in order to make it completely a tool of the oligarchy of finance capital. This was accomplished by the destruction of the Hylan machine in 1924 that was honeycombed with old-time Tammany men, by conducting a bitter fight against Hylan in which huge sums were spent to defeat him and nominate Walker as mayor of the city, by even sending many Tammany Hall men to the penitentiary.

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THE ROLE OF SMITH

Al Smith has played a leading role in accomplishing this change in Tammany Hall. Schooled in the old Tammany demagogy, trained as a 100-per cent machine man, this shrewd politician has been able to provide a "liberal" cover to his schemes of centralizing the government and has been clever enough to know that while the power of Tammany Hall now must rest upon the support of finance capital, it must still at the same time make gestures in behalf of the masses in order to retain the latter's support. In thus espousing the ideals of the new Tammany Hall of "efficiency" in government, and at the same time representing this in the guise of service to the people, giving a social cover to the reactionary policies of finance capital, Al Smith has been of inestimable service to the big bourgeoisie of the country. What Elihu Root, the open reactionary, was unable to put across in 1915 through the State Constitutional Convention, Smith has been able to carry off in his three terms as governor with mass support from the petty-bourgeoisie, including the Socialists. For that reason Smith is popular not only with the bourgeoisie supporting the Democratic Party but with other large sections of the bourgeoisie.

NARROW SOCIAL BASIS OF FINANCE CAPITAL

The concentration of industry and government in the hands of a few has narrowed the social basis upon which the bourgeoisie rests. The capitalist class is compelled to engage in ever shrewder maneuvers in order to retain mass support and in this Al Smith, carrying over the art of demagogy developed so finely in the old organization, is a past master. The bourgeoisie, to keep the workers in check, must maintain the two-party system and in this Smith becomes of paramount importance at the present time. The ever-increasing economic oppression and brutality of the capitalist class are driving the workers and farmers to political consciousness and opposition to the rule of the employers. And this opposition menaces the two-party system.

Already in 1912 the bourgeoisie needed a Roosevelt to corrall this opposition into the channels of capitalism. In 1924 LaFollette served as a safety-valve of the bourgeoisie in keeping the working class within the bounds of the capitalist parties and an analysis of this vote would show that he drew heavily from working-class masses. Al Smith is needed to deceive and to retain the masses of the workers within the two-party system. Such men are useful decoys for the resentful and embittered masses seeking for a way out of the heavy burdens of unemployment and the system of exploita-

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tion and oppression. It is for that reason that Al Smith is so much more of an obstacle to the freeing of the working-class from the enslaving two-party system and it is for that reason that he is regarded as such a "great man" by the bourgeoisie. While the Democratic Party has more able men (Walsh, Reed, etc.), these men cannot pose so effectively as a "people's man." Politicians posing as friends of the people are what finance capital needs very badly to deceive and betray the masses.

SMITH'S RECORD IN OFFICE

Al Smith's record in office as a capitalist politician shows that he is a whole-hearted champion of the capitalist system and an upholder and loyal defender of capitalist rule. In 1915 the Citizens Union of New York, summarizing the activities of Smith, said of him that "he was an experienced and resourceful leader who seldom exerted his influence in behalf of desirable (sic) legislation, and could be relied upon as a machine man." In that same year, at the convention to amend the constitution of New York State, Smith won high praise from Root and the ultra-reactionary delegates of the Republican machine for his support of the reactionary short-term ballot, executive budget and the autocratic legislation for the centralization of the government, proposed by Root. In fact, Smith went farthest in that convention when he expressed himself in favor of a cabinet system for governor similar to that put over by the Hamiltons and Madisons in establishing the cabinet system for president. And what the people voted down in the elections of 1915 because of these autocratic features by a vote of 900,000 to 400,000 Smith put through in the course of his last few terms of office and proposed even one step farther in this centralization scheme by the addition of a 4-year term for governor which even the reactionary Root did not consider politically wise to introduce in that convention.

In his recent message to the state legislature, summarizing his period in office, Smith had not a word to say regarding growing violence against the working-class, the curbing of the right of freedom of speech, the denial of the right to strike and picket. In fact, it is his centralization of government which is responsible for this violence. It was during his term in office that Ruthenberg, Gitlow, Larkin and others were sent to Sing Sing, and at this moment of writing we find the right-hand man of Smith, Judge Proskauer, putting through the most vicious injunction decision against the needle trades workers which virtually gives every single employer automatically the right to secure injunctions against organized labor

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and which proposes to send eighteen leading needle trades workers to jail for contempt of court.

SMITH IDEAL CANDIDATE FOR FINANCE CAPITAL

Smith is therefore an ideal man for the finance capitalists of the country. He has helped to establish a Tammany Hall free from the old politicians of the ward-healer variety—a Tammany Hall in which the big bourgeoisie finds open sesame. And lest any one doubt that the old Tammany Hall is no more, this chief of Tammany has seen to it that the change be physically expressed in deserting the quarters of the old Tammany Hall on Fourteenth Street and in the establishment of a new Tammany Hall of the million-dollar variety, indicating the solidity of an institution representing the interests of the big bourgeoisie, and as we write we learn from the press that as its temporary headquarters Tammany Hall is establishing itself on Park Avenue, the most aristocratic and parasitic section of New York City.

The forces of imperialism, however, which have created a new Tammany Hall will cause the destruction of this pernicious organization in the course of the developing class-consciousness of the masses.

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UNEMPLOYMENT IN GREAT BRITAIN

By C. WHITE

The article printed below indicates how far the British workers are ahead of the workers of "prosperous" America in the matter of relief for the unemployed at the expense of the bosses and the capitalist state. The controversy in Great Britain is not as to whether the workers are to get relief or not, but primarily the question of how much relief and under what conditions.

Now that unemployment is again making havoc in America, the activities of the British working class in this connection become of greater interest than ever.

The Blanesburgh report referred to below is one prepared by a committee of which Lord Blanesburgh is chairman, which committee was appointed by the Conservative Government of Great Britain to bring in a report aiming to break down the standards of unemployment insurance and relief that the British working class has won through previous struggles. American workers, accustomed to the activities of Green, Woll and Company, will not be surprised to find British labor leaders co-operating with this committee in an effort to help the capitalist government to put across its revision of the unemployment insurance scheme.—*Editor.*

WHEN that well-known forgery, the "Zinoviev Letter," enabled a British Conservative Government to come to power in 1924, it became obvious to any student of the class struggle, that great attacks upon the British workers were going to be launched. Precisely after fifteen months of active preparation, (building up of the fascist Organization for Maintenance and Supplies), the Government began its offensive: arrest of twelve leaders of the British Communist Party, attacks on the miners' wages that led to the General Strike, the Anti-Trade Union Bill, the raid on Arcos and the breaking off of diplomatic relations with the USSR.

While all the above attacks were going on, the Government did not forget that *one of the most vital problems which British capitalism has to solve is Unemployment.* There have been, during each of the last three years, roughly one million and a half persons registered as being in receipt of poor law relief, (if we add to these all people who are not registered, we come to a total of well over two millions). Hence the Government's plans for "adminis-

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trative economies," and the following attacks upon the unemployed workers: the Guardian's Default Act, the Poor Law Reform Proposals and *the Blanesburgh Report.* The latter, the most savage of all, is going to react seriously upon the unemployed, as the following analysis indicates:

THE BLANESBURGH REPORT

On October 10th, 1926, the Conservative Government had appointed a Committee with Lord Blanesburgh as chairman, to report on "what changes ought to be made, if any, in the Unemployed Insurance Scheme." Besides its own representatives, the British ruling class, clever as always when wanting to introduce anti-working class legislation, had invited three "Labor representatives," to sit upon the Committee: Mr. Frank Hodges, (Secretary International Miners' Federation), Miss Margaret Bondfield, (member of the General Council of the Trade Union Congress), Mr. A. E. Holmes, (Secretary National Printing Trades and Kindred Trades Federation). These two Labor gentlemen and Miss Bondfield did not hesitate in the least in signing the recommendations embodied in the Report, which constitute the most reactionary attack that has yet been launched upon the unemployed. These recommendations suggest:

(a) *Heavy Cuts in the Present Scales* . . . the new rates of benefit to be:

Men—17 shillings, this represents 1 shilling reduction.

Women—15 shillings, this represents no change.

Adult dependents (not more than one)—7 shillings, this represents 2 shillings increase.

Dependent Children (under 14 years of age)—2 shillings, this represents no change.

Young men (18-21)—10 shillings, this represents 8 shillings reduction.

Young women (18-21)—8 shillings, this represents 7 shillings reduction.

Boys (16-18)—6 shillings, this represents 1 shilling, 6 pence reduction.

Girls (16-18)—5 shillings, this represents 1 shilling reduction.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE WORKERS

(b) *To minimize the opposition of the employed workers* . . . by reducing their weekly contributions. At the same time the employers' contributions are also reduced. *And their reductions are greater than those recommended for the workers:*

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Workers				Employers				State			
Present rates		*New Rates*		*Present rates*		*New rates*		*Present rates*		*New rates*	
Men	7 pence	5	pence	Men	8 pence	5	pence	Men	6 pence	5	pence
Women	6 pence	3½	pence	Women	7 pence	3½	pence	Women	4½ pence	3½	pence
Boys (16-18)	3½ pence	2½	pence	Boys	4 pence	2½	pence	Boys	3 pence	2½	pence
				Girls	3½ pence	2	pence	Girls	2½ pence	2	pence
Girls (16-18)	3 pence	2	pence	Men (18-21)	8 pence	4	pence	Men (18-21)	6 pence	4	pence
Yng. Men (18-21)	7 pence	4	pence	Women (18-21)	7 pence	3	pence	Women (18-21)	4½ pence	3	pence
Young Women (18-21)	6 pence	3	pence								

(c) *For the purpose of extinguishing the debt of* 20,000,000 *pounds* accumulated in the Unemployed Insurance Scheme, *the following additions should be made* to the new proposed contributions stated above:

Men	1 penny	Women	½ penny
Young men	1 penny	Young women	½ penny
Boys	½ penny	Girls	½ penny

(d) *The abolition of extended benefit* and *the payment of only standard benefit* (13 weeks), *to applicants who can show* 30 *stamps for the previous* 24 *months.* At present the standard benefit is for 26 weeks (maximum), in one year. After that, the applicant, if fulfilling conditions laid down by the Second Act, 1924, can get benefit for an indefinite period provided he or she can show 30 contributions at any time, or 8 contributions within the recent period of two or three years prescribed by the Act. In the future, by virtue of the "Report," the applicant's case will be reviewed by the Court of Referees at the end of 13 weeks. Then 13 weeks after (or less), the case must again come under review.

MEANING OF THE PROPOSALS

These measures will mean:

1. Hundreds of thousands will be ruled out, as it is officially estimated that about one-half of the people now receiving benefits, are receiving extended benefit.

2. Unless able to show 30 stamps during the last 2 years, no person will be in a position to claim benefit for any period whatsoever. This will particularly affect people on "broken time," who may have 30 stamps, but secured in several periods spread over 2 years.

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3. In reviewing the case after 13 weeks, and although the number of stamps may far exceed the statutory 30, the Court could disallow benefit on other grounds such as for not being genuinely in search of work, for having left work voluntarily, or for having been dismissed for misconduct, etc.

(e) *The operating of "transitional arrangements,"* which are intended to reduce the shock of being suddenly cut off may be one-quarter of a million. This is pure hypocrisy, as we know well enough the methods used by Labor Exchanges and Courts of Referees for asserting that the transition will be effected in the shortest possible time. Of course, this will intensify the burden upon the local authorities by driving people to apply for Poor Law Relief.

(f) *The urging that poor law relief should not be granted to able-bodied persons.*

A BLOW AT THE UNIONS

But the recommendations of the Report are not only directed against the unemployed. In signing them, the above-mentioned trade union officials, have endangered Trade Union rates in so far as:

(1) *A person will now be disqualified for benefit even if the stoppage is due to the employer* contravening an agreement, local or national.

(2) *If after a reasonable period of unemployment there is no prospect for an applicant to find work in his own trade,* he will be expected to seek suitable employment *in some other trade,* and if such work is found, it will be desirable that such man "should be permitted to work *at a wage somewhat less than the standard rate* in the assurance that at the end of that period he will become sufficiently experienced to be worth the full wage."

Moreover, Hodges, Holmes and Miss Bondfield have violated all the principles laid down by the Trade Union Council, namely: adequate maintenance as a paramount claim on the State; taxation on those best able to bear it; insurance of young people who enter industry; the Poor Law to play no part in the relief of unemployed persons; the Labor Exchanges to make it their duty to find work themselves for the unemployed, improvement of benefit rates, etc.

But one would be greatly mistaken in believing that the above "three," would have received a good "hiding" from their colleagues of the Trade Union Council and Parliamentary Labor Party, when a special National Conference on the Blanesburgh

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Report was held on April the 28th, 1927, because a resolution put forward by the Miners Federation of Great Britain, censuring them, was never allowed to be put to the Conference for discussion or vote. *Our reformist leaders only passed a resolution to the effect of "securing amendments in Parliament in harmony with Labor Policy."*

MASS RESENTMENT AROUSED

But the mass resentment at the Blansburgh Report made itself felt directly at the *Labor Women Conference* and indirectly at the *Trade Unions Congress*, (thanks to considerable abstentions). And there can be no question about the mass defiance of official "recommendations" and other forms of sabotage, in the case of *the South Wales unemployed miners' march to London*, at the end of 1927, when Parliament was passing the Unemployment Bill and other acts for "administrative economies."

This shows that the unemployed workers *do not turn towards Parliament to find a solution for the evil of unemployment.* They organize themselves *in the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement*, their revolutionary left wing organization, and they put forward the following demands:

(1) *Scale of benefits*: Adult workers (male or female over 18 years) 30 shillings per week.

Young workers, 15 shillings.

Boys and girls, 10 shillings.

Adult dependent (wife, mother or housekeeper, 10 shillings).

Unemployed worker's child, 5 shillings.

(2) *No contributory scheme, state to bear full responsibility for maintaining unemployed.*

(3) *Abolition of six days waiting period.*

(4) *Continuous benefit and no disqualification on the grounds of "not generally seeking work."*

(5) *Government schemes to absorb the unemployed in their own Trade at Trade Union rates of wages.*

(6) *No work to be offered by Labor Exchanges below Trade Union wages and no compulsory domestic service for women.*

(7) *Extension of credits to Russia through the full utilization of the Trades Facilities Act.*

(8) *Government schemes on roads, bridges, canals, docks and harbors, electric power supply, electrification of railways, etc.*

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(9) *The general introduction of the* 44 *hours working week as a means of absorbing the unemployed in industry.*

It is quite obvious that there is a need for establishing a close *contact between the organized employed workers and the National Unemployed Workers Committee Movement.* Therefore, local branches of the N.U.W.C.M. will endeavor to bring on their Committee, four representatives of the employed workers, two from the Local Trades Council, if possible, and two prominent Trade Unionists in their locality. Activities are to be intensified in the localities to secure higher and more stable scales of relief which does not mean that the N.U.W.C.M. stand for local authorities "maintaining" the unemployed. We believe that unemployment should be a national charge, but in our struggle against the Government we *must move the local authorities into action against the Government also.*

Will the British working class movement help the unemployed in their struggle?

One of the outstanding features of 1927 has been to show that in spite of the miners' defeat at the end of 1926, the masses have become ever more politically active. *They have shown an objective trend to the left by outliving, over-riding, breaking through the spiritual yoke of the Reformists.*

It will therefore be the work of the left wing movement in Great Britain, (political left wing, including members of the Communist Party, of the Independent Labor Party, of the Labor Party and of the Co-operatives and the industrial left wing organized around the Minority Movement and also the N.U.W.C.M.), to direct this trend through the proper channels around such slogans as:

"The United Front of all Working Class Organizations, first of all from below against the Capitalists."

"Cleanse the Movement of the Reformist Leadership."

The Conservative Government is the propelling power for all the capitalist forces. Let the left wing movement under the leadership of the Communist Party of Great Britain be the propelling power that will prepare and lead the workers to the final clash with British capitalism for the establishment of the British Workers Republic.

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THE YOUTH AND THE ELECTIONS

By HERBERT ZAM

BOURGEOIS democracy is the dictatorship of the capitalist class cloaked in democratic forms, and giving the workers the illusion that they are the real rulers by having regular elections based on universal suffrage. This is the present-day form of bourgeois democracy, what is termed "government with the consent of the governed" by the theorizers of the capitalist system. But this is the stage which has been reached after a long period of development, and is adhered to only so long as the capitalist class feels sufficiently secure in the saddle of state power. Any threat to the power of the ruling class results in the most brutal abrogation of all the "political rights" of the masses and the institution of open dictatorship. And at the beginning of capitalist rule, before it was firmly established, before it felt itself sufficiently strong to make these gestures to the masses, the capitalist class was very careful not to have universal suffrage, and even propounded all sorts of theories on this basis. Universal suffrage as it exists to-day is of comparatively recent origin, and short duration, as an examination of the present situation in the countries of the world will show.

The favorite method of disfranchisement for the toiling masses was the institution of property qualifications, which have existed till very recently, and which are even in force at the present time in many "democratic" countries. In Japan, the elections of 1928 were the first that were based upon property qualifications. This method is obvious, since it makes the basis of the rule of the bourgeoisie—the ownership of property—the qualification for participation in elections. As the bourgeoisie consolidates its power, harnesses in its service all the instruments with which to mould the ideology of the masses (newspapers, schools, movies, etc.) and develops its powerful political parties, it gradually drops the property qualifications, and enters the period of "pure democracy", thus creating among the workers and the farmers the illusion that they themselves are the government, and if they desire any changes, they can make them.

However, the property qualification is not the only method the bourgeoisie uses to disfranchise its class enemies. At the present time, there are two other methods in wide use in every capitalist

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country in the world—the disfranchisement of the women, and the disfranchisement of the youth. Even in that citadel of "democracy" the United States of America, women did not receive the vote until 1920, and even this was a war measure introduced in January, 1918. In all other countries, with very few exceptions women do not vote.

THE DISFRANCHISEMENT OF THE YOUTH

The youth is completely disfranchised. There is not a single capitalist country where the youth has any political rights. The age of 21 seems to have been established as the absolute minimum, below which the capitalist class will not make any concessions. Even this age is not universal, and has been reached by a similar process as the property requirement. Generally, the age limit was at first 30, then 25 and finally 21. In Japan, at the present time, 25 is the voting age. In England, voting for women is limited to 30 years of age and over, and in many other "democratic" countries, voting is limited to those who are 25 or 30 years of age and over, in addition to other restrictions.

Of course, when it comes to running for office, the youth is entirely eliminated. It is a well-known fact that our "law-makers" are generally old men. The theory behind this disfranchisement of the youth is that the young people are too "unstable" (shall we read "not sufficiently conservative"?) and can not be depended upon to maintain the established order. The reasoning is much the same as in the case of the property qualifications—the need for eliminating from the franchise those elements who are not yet tightly bound to the capitalist system. In the one case, it is a property tie, in the other it is an ideological tie. And of course, the property ties of the youth are very slim.

The one exception is the Soviet Union. In the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the toiling youth not only have a vote, but are also eligible for all offices. Here the only requirement is—to be a producer. All visitors to the Soviet Union have remarked on the number of young delegates to the various Soviet Congresses. Even in the highest government organs, young workers and peasants are found in official capacities. In the Soviet Union, where the proletarian dictatorship rests upon the participation of the broad masses of the toilers in the political activity of the country, the political interests of the young workers and peasants also find expression in the activities of the governmental bodies.

Mussolini, while entirely eliminating the franchise for the toiling masses, extends it to the youth between the ages of 18 and

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21 on one condition—that they are married and have children. Mussolini is willing to use the franchise as a bribe for the production of cannon-fodder in mass quantities.

In capitalist countries, the youth displays little interest in elections. Whatever interest the young workers have is generally a result of curiosity—curiosity aroused by the campaigns in the press, etc. But the youth knows well that their interests find no expression in the election campaigns thru the capitalist parties. Because of this, they also are led to the erroneous conclusion that their interests are not involved in any way in the elections. The capitalist politicians are interested in the youth only insofar as they are voters, that is those who are already over 21 years of age, and especially at the present time, because of the general apathy displayed in elections by the working class, "a special drive is being made" according to an announcement by John Hays Hammond, head of the Department of Political Education of the National Civic Federation, "to arouse interest among 7,000,000 young men and young women who will cast their first votes at the 1928 Presidential election. Efforts to reach them will be made through Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other junior organizations." As part of this drive, the capitalist parties will undoubtedly include some fake "youth planks" in their program, in order to create the illusion that they fight for the interests of the youth.

COMMUNISTS AND YOUNG WORKERS

Different from the "Socialist" youth organizations, past and present, who tried to limit the political activity of the youth to doing the dirty work for the Socialist Parties during elections; and from the bourgeois youth organizations who smother all signs of political interest of the youth, of class-consciousness, the Communist youth organizations, as political organizations representing and fighting for all the interests of the toiling youth of town and country, comes forward with a program and calls upon the toiling youth to participate actively in the election campaign and fight for their interests.

The Communist Youth Leagues are the only youth organizations throughout the world that participate in election campaigns. The Communist Youth League in this country, the Young Workers (Communist) League of America, is the only organization that brings forward a program of demands for the toiling youth, and it is the only organization that is capable of actually leading the toiling youth in a struggle for these demands. In participating in

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the election campaign, the revolutionary youth have no illusions about the possibility of their demands being granted by the capitalists. Only the victory of the proletariat will enable the youth to come into its own—will reorganize the conditions of youth labor upon a Socialist basis. The aim of the Communist Youth League is to draw the masses of the young workers and farmers into the struggles in their own interests, to arouse their interest in political questions and to awaken their class-consciousness.

The Young Workers (Communist) League of America puts forward as its first demand in the elections the extension of the political franchise to the youth between 18 and 21. The motto of the Young Workers (Communist) League is: Old enough to work, old enough to vote. The bosses will reject this demand. The parties of the bosses will likewise reject this demand. This will open the eyes of thousands of young workers and will demonstrate to them that "democracy" is a sham, and that all the fairy tales they have been taught in the public schools belong together with Grimm's in the fairy tale book.

EXPLOITATION OF THE YOUNG WORKERS

The Young Workers (Communist) League also puts before the youth its program as a basis for social legislation for the young workers. Young workers are becoming a more and more important factor in industry, and in production generally. The rationalization of industry is drawing them in as participators in the productive process in ever greater numbers. In the industries, they are ruthlessly exploited, they receive no protection either from government or trade union. They are thrown into industry pell-mell, without any preparation. The Young Workers (Communist) League has a program which can remedy this condition if it were applied. The program includes: The six-hour day and the five-day week for young workers; complete abolition of child labor and the state maintenance of the child worker; a minimum wage of twenty dollars a week for all young workers; youth protection—no night work, no work in dangerous occupations, no underground work and effective accident compensation; four weeks vacation with pay; and the proper regulation of the entry of young workers into industry through the organization of work-schools, modelled on the Soviet work-schools. This is a program which embraces the interests of the entire working-class youth, and for which the entire working-class youth must struggle, not only during election time, but during the entire year. At the same time, the Young Workers (Communist) League realizes that the interests and struggles of the youth are not and

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cannot be separated from the interests and struggles of the working class as a whole. The fight of the youth is only a part of the general fight of the working class. Therefore the youth must turn their eyes toward the broader struggle, and take part in it. The League calls upon the toiling youth to promote the political separation of the working class from the parties of their masters and organize a political Party of their own, a Labor Party, based on the mass organizations and political Parties of the workers.

It is also necessary that the young workers themselves, those who agree with our basic demands but are not yet ready to join our ranks, must have an instrument through which they can help build and strengthen the Labor Party. Therefore, wherever there are strong Labor Parties, the Young Workers (Communist) League will support the formation of Labor Party Youth Clubs and Farmer-Labor Youth Clubs, which shall be based on support of the Labor Parties, and must have their own youth demands and fill some of the needs of the young workers and farmers. In this manner, the young workers will rapidly become convinced that only under the leadership of the Communist Youth organization, the Young Workers (Communist) League, can they advance toward the social reorganization of the basis of youth's place in society.

This election campaign will be but a step in the political awakening of the working-class youth. And under the leadership of the Communist Youth International, the youth will march forward, hand in hand with their older brothers, in the struggle against the common enemy for the victory of the toiling masses.

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LITERATURE AND ECONOMICS

By V. F. CALVERTON

THE PROLETARIAN TREND

THE close of the eighteenth century was made spectacular by the French Revolution. Although the French Revolution was a bourgeois revolution, it filled poet and prophet with hope and inspiration. Poets donned red caps and, like William Blake, called themselves "liberty-boys"; revolutionary poems became the fashion. Cowper became enthusiastic; Coleridge lectured on the Revolution; Southey wrote stirring stanzas in eulogy of it; Burns smuggled guns to be sent to the convention of Paris, and in the words of Wordsworth, to be alive at that time was bliss, but "to be young was very heaven."

In literature, revolt became a symbol. The lyrical ballads were the French Revolution in English literature. The rustic was eulogized. Goldsmith, in his way, had dealt with the peasant, and Crabbe too had sung of his weary lot, but it was only with the Wordsworthians that the attitude became a philosophy. In the preface to the lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth stressed simple life and simple diction, and denounced the classical affectations of the eighteenth century. The French Revolution had bannered equality, liberty, and fraternity, and into literature swung the same spirit.

The aftermath of the Revolution, however, was discouraging and dismal. The old enthusiasm dwindled into dull despair. Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth, for example, changed from radicals into reactionaries, and the revolutionary theories of the Wordsworthian school were no longer practiced, nor preached.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

But the nineteenth century brought with it new social forces that were to agitate the western world with a new social struggle. The change from domestic manufacture to factory manufacture was destined to create a new philosophy and a new economics, to revolutionize social relations and inspire a new *Weltgeist*. The despair that followed the French Revolution was soon to give way to a hope derived from the prospect of a new social order.

The industrial revolution created a new world. Population multiplied with astonishing rapidity. Before 1751 the largest decennial increase in population was 3%; from 1781-91 it was 9%; from 1801-11 it was 14%: 1811-21 it was 18%. Rustics were attracted to the cities and agriculture suffered. The farmer

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became more and more dependent. The system of enclosures practically extinguished the common field farmer. The decline in agricultural population was very marked—at one time constituting the vast majority of the population, in 1811 the new agricultural element constituted 33% of the whole population and in 1831 less than 28%. Cobbett, in 1826, wrote in *Rural Rides*, (p. 579):

> "In the parish of Burghclere, one single farmer holds, under Lord Cornovon, as one farm, the lands that those now living remember to have formed 14 farms, bringing up in a respectable way 14 families."

In industry, Watts had perfected the steam engine; Cort discovered that coal or coke could be substituted for charcoal in all of the main process of iron manufacture; the inventions of Hargreaves, Compton and Arkwright advanced production in other fields, and Cartwright's power looms revolutionized the weaving trade. The artisan suffered as well as the farmer. The factory relegated him likewise to a position of dependency. Another factor that intensified the distress of the artisan was the law against his emigration which was not removed until 1819.

CONDITION OF THE WORKERS

The unemployment situation in these early days of capitalism was no negligible factor. The artisans grew desperate and destroyed machinery and mills. These parties had a dramatic aspect. In twenty minutes they could assemble, attack a mill, cripple its machinery, and disperse. A spirit of ferocity and violence predominated. At Manchester eight men were hanged for similar acts of destruction. In the Luddite riots of 1811 the antagonism of the artisans reached a climacteric.[1] The police were impotent. Seven regiments had to be summoned to restore order. To frustrate a resumption of such tactics, Parliament made it a capital offense to destroy any kind of machinery, and in 1812, seventeen men were hanged in York for the violation of this law. The worker became an automaton and his type of life one of incessant toil and torture. Deprivation was his undeserting enemy. Thomas Cooper in his autobiography tells of stocking weavers who worked sixteen hours a day and earned four and six pence a week. In 1802 the first factory act was passed—hours were reduced to twelve, exclusive of meals, and nightwork was forbidden. As early as 1796, the conditions were so bad that a *Society for Bettering the Conditions*

1—*Ernst Toller's drama, The Machine Wreckers, affords an excellent picture of the social background, class excitement and frenzy of the period.*

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of the Poor was organized which aimed to spread education among the proletariat. The work of Robert Owen later, of course, was remedial. No one has given a more vivid picture of the horrors of proletarian life in England in these days of early capitalism than Marx in the first volume of *Das Kapital*:

> "One set of masters this time as before, secured to itself special seigneurial rights over the children of the proletariat. These were the silk manufacturers. In 1833 they had howled out in threatening fashion, 'If the liberty of working children of any age for ten hours a day were taken away, it would stop their works.' It would be impossible for them to buy a sufficient number of children over thirteen. They extorted the privilege they desired. The pretext was shown on subsequent investigation to be a deliberate lie. It did not, however, prevent them, during the ten years, from spinning silk ten hours a day out of the blood of little children who had to be placed upon stools for the performance of their work."

The Commission of 1833, addressing its inquiries to the status of child-labor, found the conditions so unexpectedly deplorable that in the Act of 1833 Parliament forbade employment of children under nine and limited the hours of work of children under thirteen years to nine hours. By legal influence and subterfuge, however, the employer managed in considerable part to dodge this law until the law of 1853 was passed which made ten and one-half hours the established working hours for all laborers.

Engels, in *Condition of the Working Class*, declared that

> "In London, fifty thousand human beings get up every morning, not knowing where they are to lay their heads at night."

Between January 27 and March 17, 1844, a Refuge for the Houseless in Upper Ogle Street received 2,750 persons for one or more nights; in the Central Asylum, 6,681 persons were sheltered in less than three months. In Dublin, mendicity was so appalling that a single society—the Mendicity Association—gave relief to 2,600 persons, or 1% of the population, daily. In Manchester between forty and fifty thousand persons lived in cellars.

The bourgeoisie rode to prosperity upon the mechanical horses of the new regime. In *The London Merchant*, in the eighteenth century, their characters were centered, their conditions of life and aspirations to success featured, and in *Pride and Prejudice*, in the nineteenth century the same motif prevailed, only in form more subtle and effective. While the French Revolution, for a moment, had excited the hopes of proletarian as well as bourgeois, it was only the rapid rise of industrialism and the consequent organization of the workers into unions that saved the proletariat from being entirely unprotected from the ravaging propensities of the bourgeoisie.

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With the rise and organization of the proletariat, a definite proletarian psychology began to develop, and in its struggle with the bourgeoisie it slowly became a factor in the social consciousness. The tragedy of its earlier situation first affected the tearful consciences of certain of the prayerful bourgeoisie. An Adult School movement, which had grown up under the inspiration of religion, endeavored to teach proletarians to read and reverence the Bible. Other educational movements for the workers spread. But as Mrs. Trimmer indicated, the upper class was not deluded as to the extent of the educational reform. To make the children of the poor "so far civilized as not to be disgusting" was her way of describing its aim.

As a Catholic priest in America stated in regard to the labor movement, "the Church must steer it into safe and sane channels," so these tender philanthropists sought to steer working-class education into safe and sane channels—for the prevailing order. The proletariat itself, however, soon developed its own organs of education, both in the way of schools and newspapers. The Combination Act of 1824 had hastened an incipient class-consciousness on the part of many workers. Hodgskin was one of the first to labor for proletarian schools free of bourgeois influence and instruction. John Doherty urged the proletariat to "organize their own education, in opposition to upper and middle-class movements." But the debacle of the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union and the excitement over the People's Charter, and the development of the Chartists led by Lovett and the Christian Socialist movement by Maurice and Kingsley shifted the control over to the Christian reformers.

THE WORKERS IN LITERATURE

From this social struggle developed a new trend in literature, the proletarian. A new phase in the sociology of literature evolved. The proletariat was sentimentalized. In the days of the aristocracy the bourgeoisie, then the opposing class, had been ridiculed, but "in the grand mutations of society," as Sumner stated before the Boston Mercantile Library Association in 1854, "the merchant throve" and "at the close of the seventeenth century an edict was put forth, which Locke has preserved in the journal of his travels, "that those who merchandise but do not use the yard shall not lose their gentility.' " A century after Locke, Samuel Johnson declared that "the English merchant is a newly discovered species of English gentleman." The bourgeoisie, then, with its dominancy, scorned the proletariat as deeply as the aristocracy had scorned the bourgeoisie. With the rise of the proletariat, a proletarian trend begins.[3] Artists look upon the life of the proletarian with interest and sympathy. It is true that Burns and Wordsworth had looked with kindly eyes

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upon the life and lot of the obscure, but with them it was the peasant and not the proletarian that attracted their attention. Then, too, in the attitude of Burns and Wordsworth and, too, of Crabbe and Clare, there had been no vision of the under-man as a class but rather an interest in him as an individual. With the proletarian sentimentalists of the nineteenth century, on the other hand, the interest changes into an appreciation of his fate as a class.

The objection to the commoner was common. But Dickens, after all, was not so strikingly a part of this proletarian sentimentalist movement as were Mrs. Gaskell, Kingsley, and Reade.

In *Mary Barton*, Mrs. Gaskell's attitude toward the proletariat is given clearcut, candid expression. After attacking the mill-owners in a vehement tirade of phrases, John Barton adds:

> "Don't think to come over me with th' old tale, that the rich know nothing of the trials of the poor; I say, if they don't know, they ought to know. We're their slaves as long as we can work; we pile up their fortunes with the sweat of our brows, and yet we are to live as separate as Dives and Lazarus with a great gulf betwixt us; but I know who was best off then."

Kingsley was of a kindred attitude. In Alton Locke his proletarian sympathies were portrayed with poignancy and social passion:

> "I do not complain that I am a Cockney. That, too, is God's gift. He made me one, that I might learn to feel for poor wretches who sit stifled in reeking garrets and workrooms drinking in disease with every breath—bound in their prison house of brick and iron, with their own funeral pall hanging over them, in that canopy of fog and poisonous smoke, from their cradle to their grave. I have drank of the cup of which they drink. And so I have learnt—if, indeed, I have learnt—to be a poet—a poet of the people."

This school marked the beginning of the proletarian trend in literature which later developed into a movement and in Russia into an art of its own.

3. *This trend, called proletarian merely for convenience of distinction, should not be confused with the matter of proletarian art, which is something entirely different. Art produced by the proletariat for the proletariat or for all society comes with a newer evolution in society.*

(*To be concluded in the next issue*)

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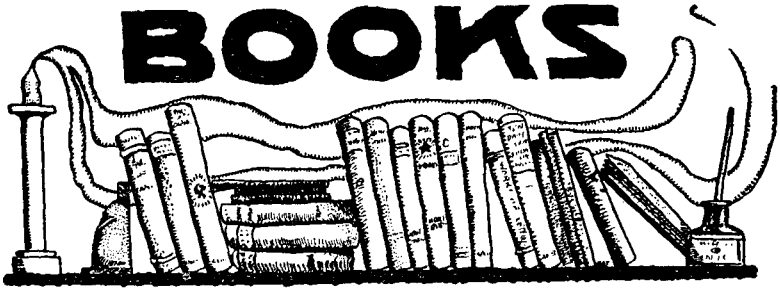

**MATERIALISM AND EMPIRIO-CRITICISM. By V. I. Lenin. International Publishers.* $3.00

THE PERIOD following the revolution of 1905 was one of deepest reaction and revolutionary demoralization, loss of faith, "disillusionment." The petty bourgeois intellectuals that had flocked to the revolutionary banner in the period of storm and stress now began to lose confidence in the forces of the proletariat, and in the future, in everything. Some, the worst, even began to desert. And to cover up this desertion, to excuse this demoralization, all sorts of new "theories" began to spring up. It was the period of "liquidationism", of "otsovism" and "ultimatism," of the most abandoned literary licensciousness, of "Sanineism", of "God-building" and "God-seeking"of "empirio-criticism", "empirio monism", of the "revision," and "completion," of Marxian materialism.

It was on the hard rocks of dialectic materialism that these "philosophers of defeat" met their disaster. The sharp and profound contrast between idealism and materialism, in philosophy, of deepest significance in the social and cultural history of mankind, proved too much for these tender souls who began to doubt—now that Stolypin was firmly in the saddle again and the reaction apparently made permanent—whether some sort of "reconciliation" could not after all be found; some kind of class peace in the realm of ideas. And the professors provided the platform for this "reconciliation" — men like Karl Pearson of England, Poincaré of France, Mach of Germany, distinguished scientists each in his own way.

What was it that these bourgeois professors brought forward to be eagerly adopted by Bogdanoff, Lunacharsky, Gorki and Bazarov? It was hardly more than a modernization of the purest idealism of Berkeley, idealism so "pure" that it could hardly be distinguished from out-and-out solipsism. But this idealism was "empirical" and therefore—modern!

**With the publication of "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism" which is reviewed above, International Publishers announce that by an arrangement with the Lenine Institute in Moscow they plan to translate and publish a definitive edition of all the writings and speeches of V. I. Lenin. The volumes announced for publication in* 1928 *incude those containing the writings of* 1905, 1914-1916 *and* 1917.—*Editor.*

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AGAINST these tendencies in philosophy (the reflection of the period of intellectual demoralization) and their influence upon the advanced workers Lenin conducted a determined fight in the form of lectures, pamphlets, in the columns of the press, legal and illegal, but above all in his basic work "*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*," which we are now examining. It would be ridiculous for us to attempt to give a hasty estimate of this profound volume. It is written in a really lucid style (which has been preserved in the excellent translation). Its significance is not merely that it meets the empirio-criticists and empirio-monists and easily routs them; its significance is that it takes up a series of tremendously important problems of modern thought—as, for example, the theory of knowledge of dialectic materialism, the philosophic implications of the "new" physics (electronic theory, relativity)—and illumines them from the standpoint of Marxism. In this sense it provides the Marxist with a guide in coping with the many far-reaching problems continually arising in this period of cultural transition and flux. "I hope that it will prove useful . . . . as an aid to the study of Marxian philosophy and dialectic materialism as well as to the understanding of the philosophic conclusions of the latest discoveries in natural science" says Lenin himself in his preface to the second (1920) edition of the book.

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AN INTERESTING light is cast upon the social roots of the "empirio" eclectic philosophies by the relation of these doctrines to certain political tendencies ("otsovism," "ultimatism") current in the same period in the Russian Social-Democracy on the one hand, and to certain ethical religious doctrines ("God-seeking," "God-constructionism") on the other. The "otsovists" ("withdrawers"—the "ultimatists" are very similar) were a section of the Bolshevik faction whose despair and loss of hope in the face of the growing reaction expressed itself in an "ultra-revolutionary" form—they declared it was impossible to do any more work under these conditions in the Duma and they therefore favored the "withdrawal" of the Social-Democratic deputies. It is very characteristic that these "ultra-revolutionaries" were precisely those who were the leaders in the movement to revise Marx along the lines of Mach and Pearson. It might be said that empirio-criticism was a plank in the "otsovist" platform.

Another phase of the same question is illustrated in the "god-building," "god-seeking" movement led by Lunacharsky and Gorki. With the recession of the revolutionary wave these people felt a certain void in the spiritual life of the workers which could only be filled by some sort of *faith*. Of course, neither Lunacharsky nor Korki believed in the traditional religious superstitions in any form or manner; so they proposed to "construct" a new God, a new faith. "God," wrote Gorki, "is a complex of ideas evolved by a people, by a nation, by humanity, that arouse and organize human feelings and have as their aim to unite the individual with society, to curb the animal individualism. . . . God-construction is

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a process of organizing and developing social principles in the individual and in society." The masses are "seeking" for a new god, the masses are "constructing" a new god—and what is this new god, this new "complex of ideas" curbing "animal individualism" and "uniting the individual to society," if not—Socialism. Here we have the reaction to despair and demoralization, the same revision along the lines of fideism and idealism as we note in the various "empirio-" philosophies, otsovism, empirio-criticism, God-constructionism . . . . all arising from the same social roots.

* * * * *

IN LENIN'S examination of empirio-criticism there are several points of vital interest in current philosophic thought. Take, for example, the philosophic implications of the "new physics." Everyone has heard that the recent advances in physics—X-ray, electron theory, relativity —have "dematerialized" the universe, have "abolished" matter. If matter is ultimately composed of electrons and electrons are no more than electric charges and electric charges are not matter but "only" energy—where then is matter? A much similar utilization has been made of the theory of relativity. Idealism can find in the general theory of relativity a new argument against materialism" (Vasiliev, Space, Time, Motion, p. 224). Poincare, Ostwald, Bertrand Russell, Eddington, and the others, all prominent and very capable physical scientists, all proclaim that they see in the recent developments in physics the final "refutation" of materialism.

"A thousand times has materialism been disproved, yet for the thousand and first time they are still continuing to overthrow it." (Lenin). Only they can hold up the new physics in antagonism to dialectic materialism who do not understand the latter and misunderstand the philosophic implications of the former. "They are very good scientists—but indifferent philosophers." Lenin uncovers the errors of these "slaughterers of materialism" with a skill and conclusiveness that argue for a deep familiarity not only with the doctrines of philosophy but even with the special developments in current physical science.

"The error . . . (of these physicists and philosophers) . . . is that the foundation of materialism is ignored, together with the distinction between metaphysical materialism and dialectic materialsm. The recognition of immutable elements, "of the immutable substances of things is not materialism, but is metaphysical, anti-dialectical materialism. . . . To put the question from the only correct, that is dialectic-materialist standpoint, we must ask: do electrons, ethers, etc., exist as objective realities outside of the human mind? The scientists must answer this question without hesitation and the answer must be an affirmative one. Thus is the question decided on the side of materialism, for the idea matter . . . epistemologically means nothing new besides some objective reality casting independently of the human mind and reflected by it." (Lenin: Materialism, etc., p. 220-221). The conflict is not between the new physics and Marxian materialism but between the new physics and static metaphysical dogmas of the old materialism. So far from contradicting dialectical

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materialism the new developments in physical science even confirm it, emphasizing the dialectical nature of the processes of the universe.

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LENIN'S critique of empirio-criticism is significant also because it has important implication for *pragmatism*, probably America's only original contribution to philosophic thought. Like "empiricism" pragmatism ridicules what it calls "metaphysics"—and utilizes this ridicule against materialism whose "dogmas" it declares to be "metaphysical." Pragmatism claims to rest on "experience and on experience only"—again like the "empiricists." Truth for a pragmatist has practice as its only criterion and James's definition of truth as "the class-name for all sorts of definite working values in experiences" is in content identical with the definition of Bogdanov: "The truth is a vital organizing form of experience; it leads us somewhere in our activity and gives us a prop in the struggle for life." It is interesting that James also did his bit in "God-constructing" by deducing a god for practical purposes apart from any "metaphysic" and on the basis of the "strictest experience." Altho the social roots of American pragmatism are very different from those of Russian and European empirio-criticism the doctrinal content of the two systems are very much the same and their class significance similar.

* * * * *

THE BOOK of Lenin we are examining is a powerful weapon in the armory of the proletarian class struggle. Not only does it lay down the basic principles of dialectic materialism—the ideology of the victorious proletariat—but it enables us effectively to dissipate the clouds of spiritualist confusion passing under the name of philosophy and assiduously purveyed both by learned professors and mere shallow fakers, all for the good cause of destroying materialism. It is as true now as it was in 1906 that "there is hardly one contemporary professor of philosophy—and theology as well—who is not directly or indirectly engaged in overthrowing materialism." (Lenin: Materialism, etc., p. 1.) The crusade against materialism has a distinct class implication and motivation. "With the destruction of materialism," declares Professor Frank, "some of the firmer props of Marxian socialism must also give way. . . ." The attack on materialism is an attack on the class ideology and the revolutionary morale of the proletariat, to meet this attack and overcome it, to strengthen and clarify the materialist ideology of the proletarian vanguard, to drive the specters of idealism, open or disguised from the minds of the workers is a major duty and an essential task in the class struggle. In this sense this book of Lenin's is a political polemic no less than his book on "Kautsky, the Renegade." It is a weapon in the class struggle.

But it is also an analysis and clarification of the foundations of science and philosophy and in this way too a major contribution to the development of human thought. The decadent bourgeoisie have renounced their birthright—materialism; they have sold it for the worst sort of idealism and mysticism for the sake of maintaining their stranglehold on society

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a little longer. Science and thought are wallowing in the mires of obscurantism. But the proletariat has taken as its class ideology a militant materialism, purified of its old errors and transformed into dialectical materialism, and in this way has provided science and philosophy with an instrument of the greatest potentiality. The proletariat and the fate of human thought—these are bound together by the objective development of the historical process. "Just as the proletariat finds in philosophy its intellectual weapon so does philosophy find in the proletariat its material weapons." (Marx.) —APEX.

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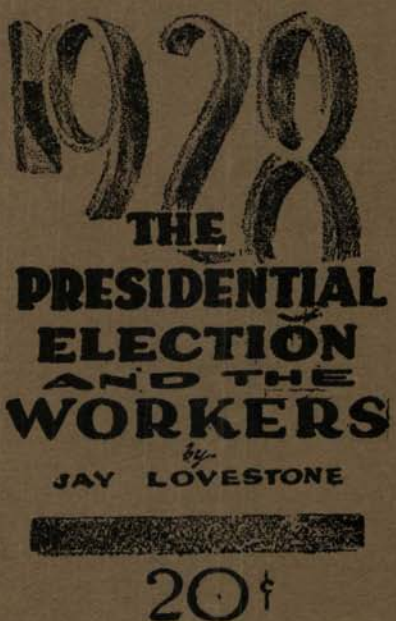

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